

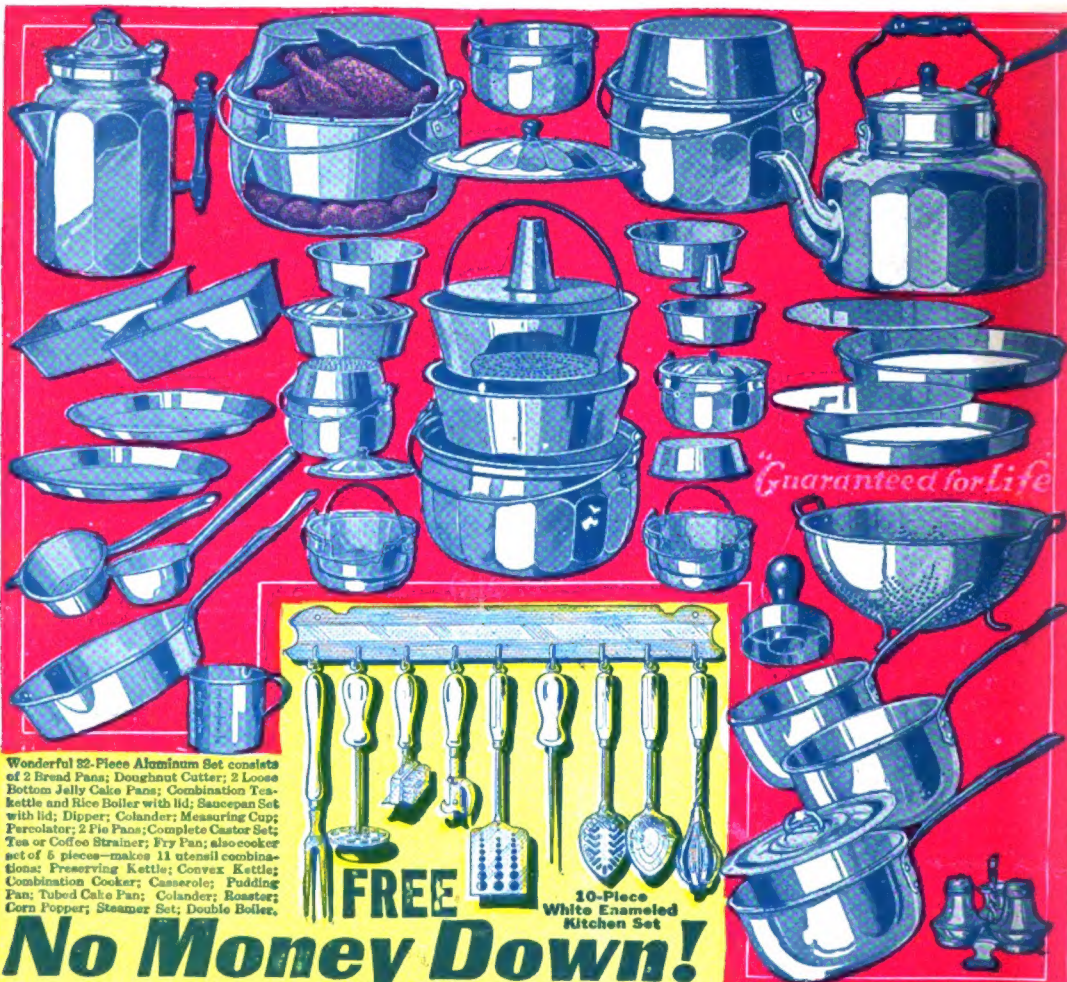
The SMART SET

Edited by
George Jean Nathan
and
H.L. Mencken.

72#2

v. 72
no. 2





Wonderful 32-Piece Aluminum Set consists of 2 Bread Pans; Doughnut Cutter; 2 Loose Bottom Jelly Cake Pans; Combination Tea-Kettle and Rice Boiler with lid; Saucepan Set with lid; Dipper; Colander; Measuring Cup; Percolator; 2 Pie Pans; Complete Caster Set; Tea or Coffee Strainer; Fry Pan; also cooker set of 6 pieces—makes 11 utensil combinations: Preserving Kettle; Convex Kettle; Combination Cooker; Casserole; Pudding Pan; Tubed Cake Pan; Colander; Roaster; Corn Popper; Steamer Set; Double Boiler.

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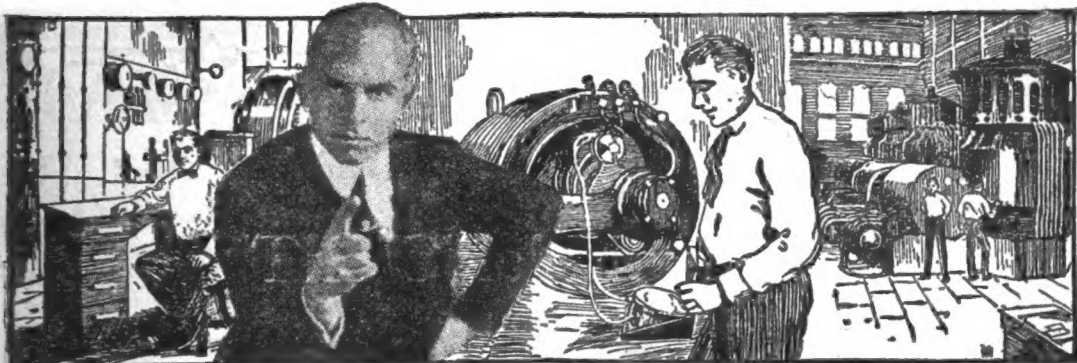
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Some day a little bug is going to get you—

Germs are here, there and everywhere. They are in the air, in your food and the very water you drink. In fact, scientists say your body is full of them. They are only waiting for your vitality to weaken and then they are going to get you.

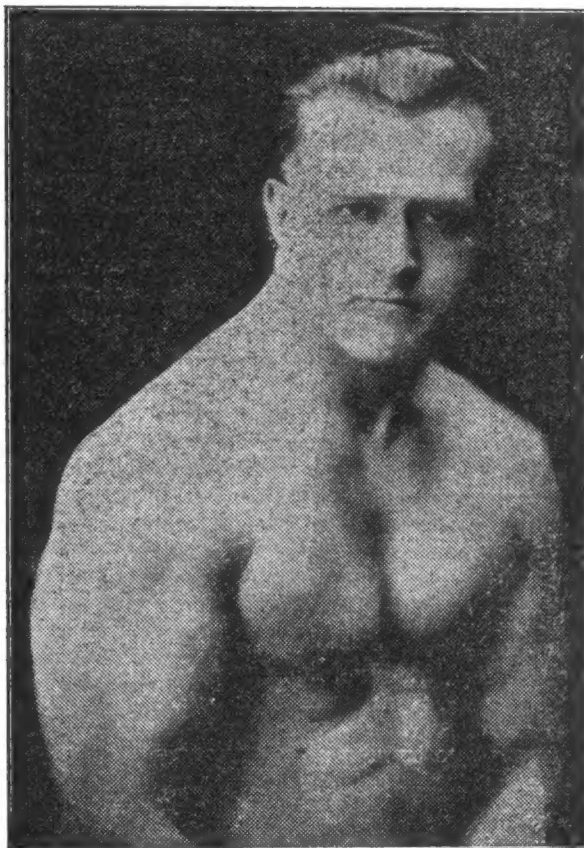
But what does a strong, healthy man care about all this? Once these terrible germs find your lungs breathing deep with oxygen and your heart pumping rich, red blood, they are going to run for their lives. A disease germ has as much chance in a healthy body as a fly has in a spider's web.

Food Was Meant to Eat

I don't ask you to give up all the good things in life. I make you fit to enjoy them. Everything was made with some purpose. Food was meant to eat and a healthy man has no regrets for satisfying his keen appetite. A man who takes the proper exercise craves food and must have it. Water was meant to bathe with—both inside and out. By drinking plenty of water you remove the waste matter within, just as washing your skin removes the waste matter without.

I Make Muscle

I am not a doctor—I don't claim to cure disease. That is a physician's job. But follow my advice and the doctor will starve to death waiting for you to take sick. I build strength and endurance. I make muscle. Follow my instructions and you will increase your arm one full inch in 30 days—yes, and put two inches on your chest in the same length of time. But that is only a starter. Meanwhile, I work on those inner muscles surrounding your heart and other vital organs which affect your entire physical being. You will soon feel the thrill of life pulsing through your veins. You will have pep in your old backbone. There will be a flash to your eye and a spring to your step. You will radiate vitality and have the strong, robust body to put it over. I don't promise these things—I guarantee them. Come on and make me prove it. That is what I like, because I know I can do it.



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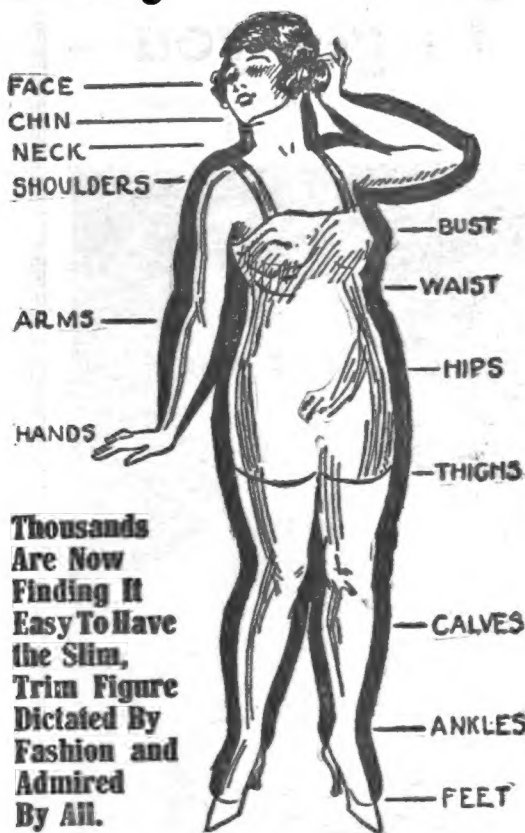
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ARE you fat? You shouldn't be. Without rigorous dieting or exercise—by a simple natural process—you should quickly and easily be able to have the slender fashionable figure that is so attractive.

Scientists have discovered that excess fat is often caused by the subnormal action of a small gland. Once this gland is healthy and functioning properly, your weight should reduce naturally and without effort on your part, to the normal amount for your height.

And science has discovered a simple extract which tends to regulate the gland that controls fat. Without lifting a hand in unnecessary and violent exercise, you should find it a delightfully simple matter to have the ideal, slender figure admired by everyone.

The wonderful thing about the scientific formula known as Rid-O-Fat is that in losing your superfluous fat you should gain added vigor, health and energy of mind and body.

Feel Young—Look Young

There is nothing which adds to a person's age so much as fat. A few extra pounds makes any man or woman look from five to ten years older. Not only that, the excess weight and increased heart action saps vitality and energy.

Once the gland which controls your fat is functioning properly your food should be turned into firm, solid flesh and muscle. As your weight comes down to normal you should experience a delightful and amazing improvement in your appearance. You should not only feel and look younger—you should actually be younger. You should also be in better health—a real health of energy—not the fictitious and deceiving health of fat that insurance companies say shortens the life ten years.

Complexion, health and figure are improved at the same time. The result is new vitality, magnetism and personal charm that makes for success. Tasks once hard become easy and life worth while.

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Within a few days you should be conscious of a new feeling of energy and lightness, taking the place of that tired, worn-out feeling.

Quickly as the fat gland resumes normal functioning you should lose weight in a healthy, normal manner. Many fat, ungainly figures are in this scientific manner helped to regain their normal and desirable proportions, giving that fashionable slenderness and athletic poise.

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Lost Twenty Pounds in Three Weeks

"According to weight tables I weighed exactly 20 pounds too much. Rid-O-Fat reduced me to normal in just a little more than three weeks. I feel better, don't get tired, and my friends say I look like a new person."

Generous Sample FREE

I want every fat person to have a chance to try Rid-O-Fat in their own homes at my expense. I don't want them to take my word or that of the thousands who have used it. I want them to see for themselves that the results are more pleasing than anything I can say. To introduce Rid-O-Fat in a million more homes I will send a free sample to anyone who will write for it. In fact it is really more than a sample, as it is sufficient to reduce the average person several pounds. I will also send with the sample an interesting booklet that explains the scientific reason for fat, and why Rid-O-Fat meets with the highest approval.

Costs Nothing! Don't send a penny—I will send the sample and the booklet under plain wrapper and fully postpaid. This does not obligate you in any way and is never to cost you a cent. It is simply a limited offer I am making to more generally introduce Rid-O-Fat.

This free offer is good for only a short time, so send me your name and address on the coupon below or a post card, and I will see that the generous sample and booklet are mailed immediately under plain wrapper postpaid. Do not try to get Rid-O-Fat at drug stores as it is distributed only direct from my laboratory to you—remember this is a short time offer and send your name at once. H. C. HAIST, Whinton Laboratories, 1504 Coca Cola Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

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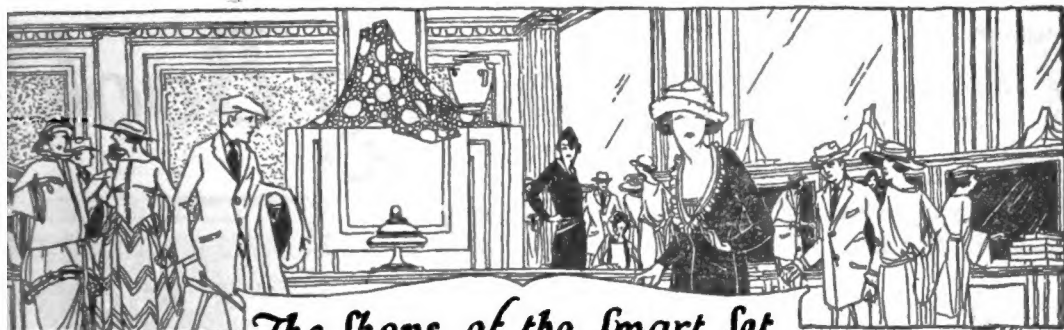
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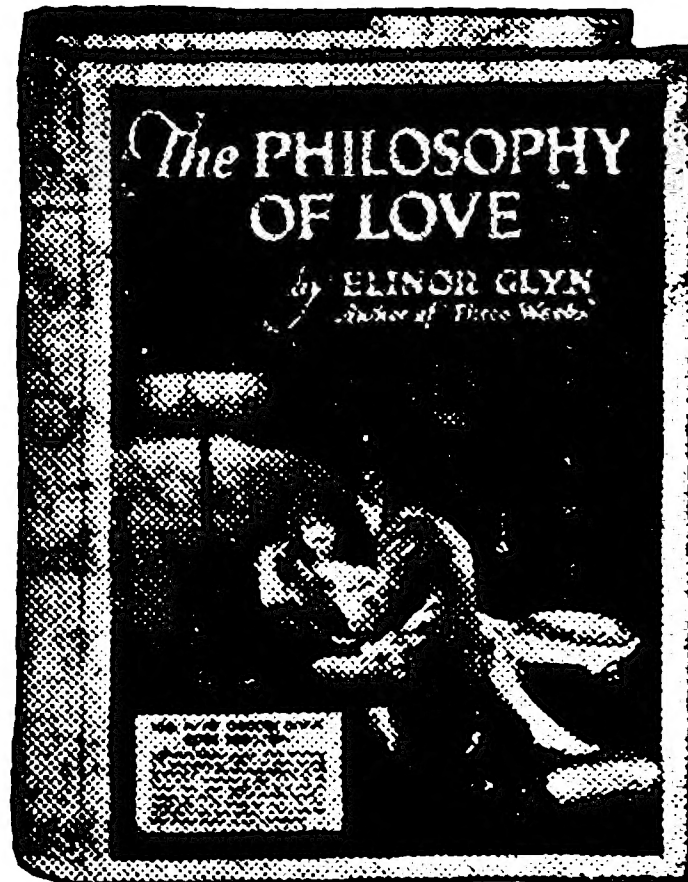
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Do you know how to retain a man's affection always? How to attract men? Do you know the things that most irritate a man? Or disgust a woman? Can you tell when a man really loves you—or must you take his word for it? Do you know what you **MUST NOT DO** unless you want to be a "wall flower" or an "old maid"? Do you know the little things that make women like you? Why do "wonderful lovers" often become thoughtless husbands soon after marriage—and how can the wife prevent it? Do you know how to make marriage a perpetual honeymoon?

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Glyn courageously solves the most vital problems of love and marriage. She places a magnifying glass unflinchingly on the most intimate relations of men and women. No detail, no matter how avoided by others, is spared. She warns you gravely, she suggests wisely, she explains fully.

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No. 2



Americana

By Major Owen Hatteras, D. S. O.

I

Arkansas

PROGRESS of the Southern literary renaissance in Arkansas, as reported by the estimable *Gazette* of Little Rock:

The Little Rock Order of Bookfellows closed its season last night with a dinner at the Elks Club, attended by about 100 members and guests. Ethyl Curtis-Gaffney directed the entertainment and George B. Rose, president of the order, presided. George W. Wirtz, of the Allsopp & Chapple Book Company, gave an interesting talk on "Black Oxen," Mrs. Gertrude Atherton's latest book, discussing it both as a creative literary work and as a scientific treatise.

II

California

ECSTATIC news note from a Los Angeles newspaper:

Los Angeles is the center of the psychic universe. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle says so.

"I find two reasons," he said today, "why the Southern California environment is supremely fitted for the furtherance of psychic research. First, the dryness of the atmosphere. Second, the tolerant attitude of the police."

III

Michigan

FROM a pious and patriotic editorial entitled "God in Our National Life" in the Flint, Mich., *Sunday Journal*:

The Declaration of Independence was the fruitage of Christ's teachings as to the relation of man to man, and the application to government and society of Christian principles. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance that this nation of ours shall be a Christian nation. Only as it is such can it possess any real hope of perpetuity. We shall not live long if we defy God, or if we ignore the truths and laws which alone can build up our national life. The nations that are dead or decadent have trampled under foot

the laws of God. If we shall continue to flourish, and be a power for good in the world, we must love and serve God and keep His commandments.

IV

Missouri

EFFECTS of the passage of a new and drastic "dry" law in Missouri, as reported by a correspondent of *Variety*:

On account of the increased hazard a general increase in liquor prices has been marked up.

The new prices, as given are: bonded whiskey, formerly sold at 75c. a drink, now \$1; white corn whiskey, formerly 25c. and 35c., now 50 cents.

Colored corn whiskey, formerly sold at 35c. to 50c., now 75c.; beer, formerly 50c. to 60c. a pint, now 75c. a pint

V

New Jersey

News note from the public gazettes of July 14 last:

Dr. Abdul Hamid Suleiman, a native of Arabia, said to have been an official at Mecca for several years, has begun a movement for spreading Mohammedanism among the negroes of the United States. Moslem groups have been started in New Jersey, one of them at Newark, where a mosque has been established. From there the Islamic missionaries will move upon the South.

VI

New York

FROM "A Statement to Teachers in the Public Schools of the United States," issued by the State University of New York to advertise its Summer School:

Upon the completion of any required or elective course with a grade of A or B the student will receive full credit for the course and will also be allowed to convert an equal number of points of *potential* to actual credit. A course completed with a grade of C will carry full credit for the course itself, but will convert only half as many points of *potential* to actual credit. A course completed with a grade of D will be credited, but will convert no *potential* credit to actual credit. For example, a student who has completed 64 points, 32 of which were with a grade of A or B and the other 32 with a grade of C, will have earned 64 points and converted 48 points of *potential* into actual credit. He will, therefore, still have 16 points of *potential* credit to be made actual which may be done by the completion of additional courses aggregating 8 points with a grade of A or B.

VII

North Carolina

FROM an advertisement in a late issue of the esteemed *Charlotte News*, signed John R. Pharr:

HARDING'S DRY, SO AM I

Harding's for law and order, so am I. Harding's a Republican. I'm a Democrat; but he's got me a-thinking and a-thinking. Smith won't do for he's wet and from a rotten State. Underwood's a mighty good man, but he and our party must take a man's stand on *liquor* or they're snowed under before the race begins. McAdoo's a tall sycamore, but thousands want a bold and public declaration on liquor and all foreign enemies of our laws and court decrees, else he's numbered with the dead.

ENGLAND WAS WHIPPED TWICE

She needs a third, and needs it now. If foreign nations won't respect our laws let 'em fight their own wars, adjust their own finances, clean up their own backyards, while we look after our own firesides. I was strong for the League of Nations, *now* things have changed.



WHAT, in the history of all romance, is as empty as the business of appearing amorous for the sake of being chivalrous?



A Part of the Institution

[*A Complete Short Novel*]

By Ruth Suckow

CHAPTER I

ADAMS COLLEGE—"The Pioneer College of the Prairies"—had been founded some forty years ago by a little band of home missionaries from New England, dedicated to "the interests of Christianity and of the higher learning in the West." Then the campus had been prairie land—a few lonesome acres in the great expanse of rolling country. There had been one building, the old Recitation Hall of red brick, dingy and ugly, plain as a barracks, that stood in the east campus. The town had been a few houses, a church and two wooden stores.

Now—in the early nineteen hundreds—the town and the campus already had an established, mellowed look. The frame houses had wide lawns and lilac bushes; and some of them—square, painted white or brown, with shutters and a cupola—began to seem elderly. The elms were tall along the wide, pleasant streets, which were still unpaved. The campus had lost most of its old raw prairie look. The five buildings—Moorish and classic and conglomerate—were softened with ivy. Flowering bushes lined the cinder paths. The big oak that had stood alone in prairie days was ringed about with maples, catalpas and tulip trees. There was a great clump of evergreens which gave age, and shadow, to the campus on the south.

The college already had its traditions, fixed and sacred. The class scrap between the Freshmen and Sopho-

mores, no dates on Sunday night, a man for class president in the fall and spring and a girl in the unimportant between months, chapel attendance, enmity with Billings (the Methodist school), that Ionian girls should "go in for society" and E. B. B. girls for "activities," the social value of Freshman class prayer-meetings. College bards had written hymns to "the Adams spirit." The spirit of "service," of "democracy," of "the good loser," of "ideals." There was an "Adams type." A man not too good-looking, a fair student but not in any alarmingly original way, athletic, a "clean Christian fellow," a good speaker, a good mixer and organizer, a member of the Glee Club and the Y. M. C. A., "the all-around man." A girl pretty, but in a girlish ingenuous way, not too well-dressed, popular with men but felt to be a conscientious student and an earnest Christian, full of enthusiasm, of "the Adams spirit," a worker in the Y. W. C. A., clever but not too intellectual, executive, "in everything," "the all-around girl." If this man and this girl became engaged to each other in their Senior year, then they had fulfilled the best Adams traditions and would be prominent alumni.

The town and college had grown up together. Adamsville—"The State Headquarters of Congregationalism," "Saints' Rest," "The Home of Adams College"—was a residence town. It had a population of about five thousand people, with prosperous banks, but in a business way it was rather slow. The only important industry was the implement factory owned by Josiah H. Por-

terfield, the leading citizen and chief trustee of the college. People moved there because the town was clean and pleasant, with the wide streets and big trees, "a nice place to live and bring up children." It was a place for retirement. Retired farmers and ministers, church officials, retired business men who wanted the advantages of the college for their children.

To the old ministers and old-timers, the church was the center of the town. A big squat gray stone building on a corner, with a dark cavernous interior in which voices were lost. It, too, had fondly cherished titles. "The Convention Church of Iowa." Conventions of the Christian Endeavor, of the W. B. M. F. and the W. B. M. I., the State Ministerial Association, the Purity League. Houses were always ready for the entertainment of delegates. "A minister killer," it was sometimes less fondly called. The Adamsville church was still looking for "a man to satisfy everybody"—the right wing of ancient "saints" who held firmly by the Atonement, the left wing of "advanced" college professors, and the center of comfortable, prosperous, fairly educated people who went home to good Sunday dinners.

The town was really built around the college. The stores catered to the college trade, with desks for rent in the furniture store, a large stock of "wienies" on hand in the meat markets, a kodak department in the photograph and art gallery, a supply of blue and white felt in the dry goods stores. Houses were built large so that rooms could be rented. Furnaces were stoked by college boys. The restaurants and "Jack the Cleaner's" had college help. Washwomen flourished in the south part of town across the tracks.

College functions made the life of the town. In the fall the football games. Adams was too small to "do much in football." Big husky country boys went to the state agricultural college and the university. But the boys had speed and the Adams spirit. They prided themselves on being good losers.

The town "grads" contributed to the football fund, and "Doc" Boardway bound up wounds free of charge. When the college beat Billings, the townspeople gathered in a dusky circle around the athletic field to watch the bonfire celebration. It was not good form for the merchants to say too much when their dry goods boxes were stolen for fuel, although it was permissible to complain to the marshal when signs were taken down and tacked above the entrance of the Congregational church or the old pest-house. Then came basket ball, and later "track." A good track team was an Adams tradition. The merchants knew the names and nicknames, year after year, of the track athletes, could compare records since the founding of the college. Little boys held track meets all spring, and staggered theatrically into outstretched arms after a run across a fifteen foot lawn. The town had rain-stained bunting that was put up every year at the time of the State Meet.

Women followed social events with painstaking interest, as men did with athletics. They knew the names of the most popular girls, and who was going with whom. On the night of the Glee Club concert—the great social night of the year—they walked slowly back and forth in front of the chapel to see the dresses as the girls went in. They had their favorites—"the cutest girls." They were anxious to learn who was to be the heroine of the Dramatic Club play. Everett DeLong, '94, the editor of the Adamsville *Messenger*, "wrote up" the college plays, and compared the heroine of the current play to those of years back, as well as to Maude Adams and Julia Marlowe. His greatest praise was to say:

After last night's performance we must admit that Miss Hutchison takes her place among the brightest stars of the Adams dramatic galaxy, well in line with Helene Royce as Hermione in "A Winter's Tale" of '97, and with James Peacock as Shylock in the 1889 "Merchant of Venice" production, and second only to the superb performance of Daisy Lyons in the title part of the "Antigone" of Sophocles as performed in 1891.

Everett DeLong still kept alive the breathless tradition of Daisy Lyons as Antigone.

Everybody went to the Commencement events. The women of the town left their noon dishes and went over early to the campus on Class Day to get good seats in the rows of folding chairs in front of the outdoor platform, taking newspapers with them so that the varnish on the chair backs would not stick to their clothes in the heat. They made their husbands carry over cushions and camp stools to the campus on the last evening when the Glee Club sang. They knew all the old songs in the Club's repertoire—"Oh, I hope they sing 'Carry me back to old Virginny' next!" They marked their programs at the oratorical contests and agreed or disagreed hotly with the verdict of the judges.

There were snake dances, night shirt parades and hay rick rides through the main streets of the town. Caps and gowns in the spring. The two girls' literary societies—the Ionian and the Elizabeth Barrett Browning—mildly took the place of sororities in the school, fulfilling the Adams tradition of democracy. Housewives were accustomed to coming to their doors and calmly answering questions when initiates took the cat census of the town or the number of women who believed in Carrie Nation.

When school was over the town was "dead." There was nothing in the summer except an occasional baseball game between professors and business men. The town settled into a thick summer languor, under the great trees, in the moist heat of central Iowa. When fall came, and Harvey Higgins, the one lank drayman, carted trunks through the town, and there were hysterical greetings and embracings on the brick platform of the little station, people said, "Well, it seems pretty good to have them back after all."

CHAPTER II

THERE was only one girls' dormitory at Adams—"the Dorm"—a large brick

building on a wide, sloping lawn, with fire escapes where town boys stole pans of candy set out to cool, and a gloomy reception hall where calling youths waited upon the "anxious bench." Freshman girls lived in the Dorm, as recommended by the Dean of Women, but the upper classmen lived in rooming houses on the three long streets that ran parallel to the campus. Some of these had traditions of greatness—the Wilson House, the Harris House, the Trombley House—either because great ones lived there, or because the landladies were good-natured. Everything depended upon "the bunch of girls." The importance of the men's rooming houses was more shifting.

The Harris House was one of the most famous. It was a tradition that some of the most prominent E. B. B. girls should room there, with one or two Ionians to keep away the dread name of sorority. It was an old barny two-story brown house with a narrow porch and big drafty rooms with battered furniture. Since the death of Mr. Harris, a few years ago, the house was in fearful repair. The furnace would not heat the big rooms, the bedrooms smelled like steam laundries in the mornings and the mirrors were dim with vapor; steam would suddenly come bursting through a wall, there were floods in the cellar when tubs and pails had to be collected and girls had to run over to the campus for masculine aid in stemming the torrents. The bathroom was unheated. But still, "nice girls had always stayed there." There were many male callers at the Harris House. It kept its popularity in spite of steam, floods and freezing. It stood on a corner of College Street across from the campus and from the new Carnegie library that was just being built. One large birch tree on the lawn threw a shadow over the porch where couples lingered on pleasant evenings.

The Harrises were one of the semi-important families of Adamsville. Mr. Harris had been a neat, insignificant little man. But Mrs. Harris was in some way related to the Adams family,

so that she sometimes appeared in the less imposing reception lines, and as a helping hostess at teas. A little slender gentle, nervous woman, with bright, sweet eyes set in bony, darkened sockets, wearing always a black silk dress trimmed with black lace and a band of velvet around her little throat, making an appearance of appealing gentility. She was a cousin of the Mrs. Adrian Adams who had married her cousin, Adrian Adams, Jr., sole son of the Adrian Adams who had given the land for the campus of Adams College. Mrs. Adrian Adams lived in one of those square, white houses and had the only victoria and coachman in town. Adrian Adams wore the only Adamsville silk hat. A faint traditional glory glimmered about Mrs. Harris.

The older children, Alma and Russell, had both been graduated from Adams and had married classmates. They had been of "the Adams type." Perhaps a little more exclusively devoted to religion than the students of this day. Alma had been the president of the Y. W. C. A. in her Senior year, and an E. B. B. Russell had been in the Y. M. C. A. cabinet and on one of the gospel teams that were sent out to the surrounding small towns to preach Adams ideals and recruit new students for the college. "All-around fine students" and "in everything." Alma was now living in Montana, where her husband was a superintendent of schools, and Russell was in social service work in the East.

Hester, the youngest, had grown up in the shadow of the college. She adored the girls who stayed in the Harris House. Her mother, a shy little woman with delicate notions of gentility, would not permit her to "bother the girls." But sometimes she sat perched on a cot listening with shining-eyed, breathless awe to their talk of dates and classes and "Society." Some of the girls were always active. Always about the campus, doing all their studying in the library. Others sprawled about their rooms, in kimonos or comfortable, sloppy undress, their hair

down or hanging by two pins. They lay on their cots and talked, one girl's head in another's lap. About five o'clock there was a rush for the bathroom. These girls were the ones who "dolloed up" for their evening dates, standing in front of the mirror and staring intently, then leaning forward to rub the powder out of their eyebrows with a moistened finger, putting on their corsets again and taking a deep breath as they clasped them.

At times they would suddenly pet and fondle Hester, praising her with school girl extravagance. "Hasn't this child the darlinest smile! I think she has the sweetest expression! Honestly, I think she's got the dearest disposition of any girl I ever saw."

Hester came up to see them when they were dressed for a function and stood adoring. Flowers were sent for the great event, the Glee Club Concert. She was given a bud or two when she helped to hook dresses and powder backs and offered eagerly to press petticoats at the last minute. She opened the door for swains and said shyly, "Won't you sit down? I'll call her"—then sped softly up the stairs to whisper in high excitement. "Somebody's come for Mildred!"

The girls' rooms—the cots piled with cushions, the fly-nets on the wall stuck full of photographs, the Indian heads of tinted plaster, the burnt-wood boxes, the pennants, the toilet things on the dressers, the chafing dishes and tea cosies. "A college girl's room." The girls at Adams took care of their own rooms—the boys, paying less rent, did not—but Hester was sometimes sent up with new castors or tacks. She slept with her mother in the old back parlor downstairs. She tried to make one corner of it look like "a college girl's room" with some of Alma's old pennants, all the kodak pictures that she could gather—known and unknown—pasted on an oblong of shiny black cambric, a covered waist box and some cushions. Babe Dunkel—a girl with flying black fuzzy hair, "a caution"—had a cushion covered with the little

colored silk bows from the inner rims of men's hats. Hester would have given anything in the world, she thought, for a cushion like that. But the boys that she knew still wore caps, and she was much too shy and awe-struck by the college "men" to beg such trophies from them.

She admired all the girls—all the Harris House girls were "nice"—but she had special ones whom she worshipped. Daisy Lyons, the wonderful girl who had played the part of Antigone, whom Everett DeLong declared to be better than Julia Marlowe, had stayed there for a year. Then she had suddenly married an elderly widower in her home town and never reappeared at Adams. Hester had an old glove box of her mother's, of dark red plush lined with faded, tattered red satin, which she called "my most precious trophy box." In it she kept a little square photograph of Daisy Lyons—a girl with a severely classical face, with black hair combed up into a "psyche" and a square-necked white gown with enormous sleeves—a handkerchief that Mary Purcell had given her for Christmas, a faded sprig of lilac that had dropped from the coat of the 1897 football captain and that Hester had rescued from under the sofa when her mother was sweeping, a letter from Helen Garvis, an ancient bud from Helen's Glee Club flowers. Helen Garvis was her great adoration. She had been called "an ideal Adams girl." She had fluffy fly-away light hair, a sunny fresh-colored face, little soft hands. . . . Hester had worshiped her. She had "gone in for everything"—had been Y. W. president, in the Dramatic Club play, Senior president of E. B. B., had given the mantle oration. She had married John Fellows, the great man of her class—"an ideal Adams couple"—and they had gone to Asia Minor to found a new Adams among the Turks. Professor Hildebrand called Helen Garvis "the incarnation of the Adams spirit." Helen Garvis . . . oh, she was the most wonderful, most perfect girl who had ever gone to Adams!

Hester was softly, wistfully, eagerly devout. She prayed:

"Oh, please dear Father, please make me grow up like my darlingest belovedest Helen. Oh, dear Father, I pray Thee, *please* make me like Helen, just as much as it is in Thy power for me to be like her—dear Father, and be taken into E. B. B.—if it pleases Thee that I should—but, oh, *please* dear heavenly Father, because I can't bear to live if I'm not. Oh, but *like Helen* . . . for Jesus' sake I ask it."

Then she sprang into bed, glowing with happy, secret shame, and snuggled down under the covers beside her mother who murmured, "Darling, mamma likes to see you good, but you make such long prayers when it's so cold. Your little feet are like ice. Can't you do part of your praying in bed?" "Oh, *no*, mamma!" "That furnace—I'm beginning to despair. I'll have to order coal again . . . eats up coal. . . ." Hester lay shivering and glowing, only half hearing. She was ashamed, far too shy and maidenly, to confess to God that she wanted to marry someone just like John Fellows. But that was in her prayers—and to go and start a new Adams in the most savage part of Africa, an even more glorious John and Helen . . . she wandered into sleep from a savage village filled with cocoanut palms where two noble people in white clothes were going about laying healing hands on the heads of little suffering savage children, braving terrible perils together. . . .

She knew Alma's and Russell's old Annuals—the "Pioneer"—by heart. The names of all the prominent students who had ever gone to Adams. She was sick if some popular Freshman girl turned down E. B. B. for Ionian. She went to every one of the Commencement events, and tried not to weep when one of her favorites crossed the platform of the Congregational church to receive her diploma with a dipping bow. "Helen Geneva Garvis"—"John Warburton Fellows"—her emotion when those names were called. She lived through the summer until

Harvey brought over the trunks in the fall.

She was in High School now. She "went in for" High School activities, because that was the Adams way. She yelled desperately at football games, helped edit "Pebbles," organized class parties, tried to make bright helpful little talks, like those of the college girls, at the Christian Endeavor. She "went with" various High School boys. All this was what the college girls did.

She wanted so fervently to be a real Adams girl. It was her religion, and Helen was her goddess. She believed with absolute trust in every aspect of the Adams ideals. She would die, she thought, if she weren't taken into E. B. B., if she didn't have a man for the Glee Club Concert. But she thought that these were mere selfish ambitions, that they shouldn't matter so violently as her young eager heart knew that they did, that what did matter was "service."

CHAPTER III

HESTER was going to make a dear little Freshman, upper-class girls who lived in Adamsville said. She was slight and girlish, with a pretty early bloom—with light straight soft hair, a round delicately tinted face and slender throat, eager, innocent, responsive eyes. She had a lovely, wistful, tremulous, believing smile. The older girls were kind to her, and she repaid them with an utterly trustful, fervent and yet shy devotion.

College opened, and she was a part of it. She went actually to register with the two Freshman girls from the Harris House. She was one of the girls now—an Adams girl.

She was starting well—not through calculation, but through the fervency of her belief and enthusiasm. She flung herself heart and soul, without reserve, into the activities of the Freshman class. Everything was going like a wonderful radiant dream come true. She had got "Pa" Taylor for Latin and "Bunny" Phelps for English, just as she had hoped. One of the Junior girls

in the house was on the social committee for the Opening Reception, and she had "got a good man" for Hester—Randall Doty, a Junior who was a leading debater. There were fewer men than girls at Adams. Hester was one of the triumphant Freshmen who had a man all to herself. She wore her sheer white lace-trimmed graduating dress and the new long white gloves that Alma had sent her. Afterward, Randall Doty asked her for several dates, flattered by her little soft eager responsive laugh and her lovely smile. She was being rushed for E.B.B. Delight Peterson beckoned her into a corner of the library and murmured significantly: "Hester—if you get an Ionian bid don't take it until you hear from me." She was even being rushed tentatively for Ionian, although they knew that Alma had been an E.B.B. and that she went with the girls in the Harris House. That showed her eminence—that, and having dates with a prominent Junior.

She was one of the most popular Freshmen immediately. She and the other two Freshmen girls, Bess and Jinny, scarcely slept the night before the class scrap. They bound veils around their hair so that they need not comb it in the morning, but could dash straight over to the campus when the scrap began. Hester carried water for the fighters—a sign of social supremacy—and tore up three handkerchiefs to bind wounds. Afterward she eagerly handed out coffee and wiener sandwiches from the kitchen of the Harris House. At the first class meeting she was elected secretary by acclamation.

She was chosen to lead the first class prayer meeting, which sinners and all attended, youths eyeing the girls to whom they would say with facetious nonchalance—"You seem to be going my way." She made an appealing, enthusiastic little talk on "Freshman Ideals." Afterward the girls crowded around her, exclaiming fervently, "Hester, you were wonderful! That was the best thing!"

"Oh, girls, was it?" she asked tear-

fully. "I was simply scared to death!"

They fell away respectfully as they saw that Jay Oehrle, a Freshman boy who was "showing up prominently," was lingering to walk home with Hester.

Jay carried Hester's testament and notes for her. He murmured,

"That was a great little speech, Miss Harris. I certainly wish I could do half as well when my time comes."

"Oh, you will!" Hester declared. "You'll do lots, lots better!"

He declared that it wasn't the kind of a night to go straight home. It was chilly, windy, raw. But they walked up and down the cinder paths in the blowing dusk, talking and pretending that they didn't feel the cold. Hester forced her teeth not to chatter and declared, "No, really I'm not cold."

"I don't want to make you catch cold or anything," Jay said, "but I certainly am enjoying this."

They talked about serious "real" things—about what college ought to mean to people, and what class prayer meetings "stood for," what the Adams spirit was, what girl would make the best class president for the winter term. When Jay finally left her on the worn porch of the Harris House, he declared earnestly,

"This certainly is the best talk I've ever had with a girl, Hester. I hope we can have lots more of 'em. I tell you, I think the people that have got the best interests of the class at heart ought to get together. It does a fellow good to talk with a girl that's got some ideals."

When she went into the house with eyes and nose red with cold, Jinny and Bess, who had been waiting for her, exclaimed disgustedly, "Well, he might at least have taken you to the Vienna and got you a sandwich to warm you up after keeping you out in the cold for three hours!" Jinny said she had picked Jay Oehrle "for that kind."

Jay usually took Hester home after class prayer meetings. She declared to Jinny and Bess,

"You know, girls, I like Jay better

because he just talks about serious things to me, and doesn't take me to the Vienna afterward and everything, just like a regular date. Jay has the most wonderful ideas."

Jay Oehrle was a short slight boy with a thin dusky face and gray eyes, heavy black hair that fell in a thick lock over his forehead. He was going to be a minister. He led the Freshman yells with savage earnestness, screwing his face up into a tortured frenzy of bitter enthusiasm. There were already deep lines in his thin swarthy cheeks. He scolded the class bitterly for its lack of spirit.

There were more boys—"men," she learned to call them now. Some of the older girls told her that it was better not to stick to one in her Freshman year, but to "try them out." Such advice was too worldly for Hester. But she enjoyed with a bubbling recklessness under her earnestness the new delights of going with now this one, now that one, the exhilaration of her Freshman popularity. Of course, the older girls said she might lose out on the Glee Club concert and some other things this way—that was when it was an advantage to have "a steady man." Hester said, "Oh, I like all the boys so well, I think the Freshman class has the most wonderful bunch of boys ever got together!"

She loved the "serious talks" with Jay. And the first class president, Rob Alden, a rosy stocky boy with eye-glasses, was "the grandest boy." Bunt Peterson was "loads of fun." She even went out once or twice with Big Bill Warren, because she was too tender-hearted to "turn him down forever" and he kept patiently asking her. Big Bill came from Winner, a tiny village a few miles from Adamsville. Big Bill from Winner was a joke in Freshman year. A huge awkward bony Freshman whose two long front locks of hair hung down to his heavy eyebrows and whose wrists and raw red hands dangled far out of the sleeves of his shiny coat, with deep-set mournful eyes and an enormous grinning mouth. He was tremendously solemn when he was

with Hester, saying respectfully "Yes, ma'am," but there were already rumors among the boys that that big gawk from Winner was "a regular clown." Of course he could not be taken seriously, like Jay Oehrle and Rob Allen, who seemed like real Adams boys.

Hester was naturally, instinctively among the "good bunch"—except for Jinny. Not necessarily the social belles, but the girls who were "active in Freshman affairs." Ellen, Bess, Margaret, Della, "Crazy Gertie" Bumstead. They asked her to the Dorm for meals and included her in spreads.

Bess Lake was in the Harris House because her Senior sister, Carrie, stayed there. Jinny Woodward had been recommended by a graduate from her home town. Jinny was tremendously popular for the first three weeks, was rushed by both societies—then she was felt to be "a mistake." She was pretty, she could sing and play, men liked her—but she was not the Adams type. She scoffed and would not go in for things unless she pleased. She was felt to be "a little too swift." She went to one of the town dances, with a "town fellow." Dancing was against the Adams traditions, although it was not damning to "be called up for dancing." But town dances were beyond the pale. Jinny always wanted to "do something reckless." She would not listen to the older girls. She said rebelliously, "I don't know who appointed Carrie Lake my Dutch uncle. I don't care. Dad made me go here and if I'm sent home it's his own fault."

But Hester loved Jinny, although she "couldn't approve of all the things she did." She was fascinated by Jinny—her round, soft-featured, dark, rebellious face, her curling dusky hair and dark starry eyes and piquant uneven brows, strongly marked, one higher than the other. She mourned over Jinny and pleaded with her. Jinny had "another self." Why didn't she show it? Why did she do all these wild things that counted against her? She tried to "get Jinny into things." Jinny could do anything if she would.

As the year went on, and the older girls showed their disapproval more markedly, Jinny grew more reckless. Hester did things for her that tortured her sensitive conscience. She would not tell the other girls when Jinny went out with Dave Greenaway, a "fast" Junior against whom she had been warned. She stayed awake to let Jinny into the house after hours. She opened the upstairs window when she heard Jinny softly call, and, with smothered giggles, climb up the porch post to the balcony. When her own mother was responsible for the girls! She, Hester, who believed so earnestly the little speeches that she made in the Y. W., lying and helping another girl to lie! Yes, and about the things that Adams girls didn't do!

After the episode of the town dance, both societies dropped Jinny, although she did room at the Harris House. Hester got her bid to E. B. B. The upper class girls called her and Bess into Carrie's room and told them, with many ecstatic embraces, before the bids were out. They had a spread for them—cheese dreams and fudge. They said that they were sorry about Jinny but she'd killed her own chances. If she cut out Dave Greenaway and the town fellows, she might have a chance in the spring. Hester could not conceive of refusing an E. B. B. bid, but it was dreadful to go in without Jinny.

They had a queer friendship, disapproving and pleading on Hester's part, scoffing and then suddenly remorseful and affectionate on Jinny's.

"Jinny, if you'd only give yourself a chance, you'd love Adams."

Jinny said the whole thing was "too tame." She wrote verses about "purple adventure," furious when Hester found them in her English notebook and declared that they were "good enough to hand in to the *Adams Magazine*." What did she mean by adventure? She didn't know, but "something wild, something crazy."

Hester's friendship for Jinny was the only stain upon the clear shining purity of her Freshman record. She did all

the things that Freshman girls should do. She started out on the committee for the first Freshman party, ladling out lemonade on the lawn of the house of the Dean of Women. She was on social committees, prayer meeting committees, committees to get up class yells and services for the Day of Prayer, the first Freshman girl to lead a meeting of the Y. W. C. A. She went with her Opening Reception man, Randall Doty, to the Glee Club concert. She seemed all the more a real Adams girl because she wore her little simple graduation dress. Randall added a touch of imposing elegance by having sent to Farwell City for her roses. Big Bill had asked her, too. She had turned him down, of course—gently, because Hester couldn't help being kind—but it was all the more glorious and exciting to have had two invitations.

Big Bill, in his old blue suit with a choker collar, officiated as an usher—a consolation prize given to single but respected youths. He started the evening in gloom, but his natural clownishness broke forth, his huge grin widened and widened, and he took great glee in seating a frivolous Freshman couple among the faculty and in leading Stub Parker to a seat beside his last year's girl. In the intermission he distributed, with great applause, tiny bunches of artificial forget-me-nots to all the ushers. It was seen at once that Big Bill was coming to the front.

Hester was generously glad that on one occasion, at least, Jinny shone. She looked "glorious"—all the girls admitted it. She wore a pale green evening gown that showed her soft dusky-white shoulders and her black hair was piled and twisted into a psyche knot. Dave Greenaway had sent her two dozen American Beauty roses. Her cheeks and her lips had a dark glowing color. For once that night the girls exclaimed over her, approved her. Dave escorted her to the chapel in the one Adamsville hack. He wore the only dress suit outside of the Glee Club and the faculty circle. It was a night of imposing triumph for Jinny.

But she did not get into E. B. B. in the spring. She had no solid position in the Freshman class. Hester wept and pleaded with her to come back to Adams the next year. It hurt her desperately when Jinny broke into bitter, laughing, biting mockery of all that Hester felt that Adams "stood for," getting more and more reckless as Hester wept, finally calling the leading spirits of the Freshman class "a bunch of rubes varnished with religion."

"You know very well that Dottie Burroughs does as many wicked things as I've ever done. But she makes little sweetie talks in Y. W. and so it's all right. I don't pretend to, that's all. I don't sugar over what I do. People have such fits about Dave. 'Wild'—well, what if he is? Just the same, Dave's one of the most decent fellows I was ever with. I'd trust him any time before I would Jay Oehrle."

"Jinny! You've always been unjust to Jay. But I'm *not* going to listen to you when you say anything against Adams."

Jinny said too much for even Hester. Even when Jinny caught her in the hall the next day and pushed her into her room, throwing beseeching, remorseful, soft arms tightly about her, and calling herself ridiculous extravagant names, Hester—although she smiled tremulously and let herself be embraced—found her tender, trusting, orthodox little heart wounded beyond speedy healing. She couldn't respond wholeheartedly to Jinny's coaxing and embraces and funny remorseful antics.

Not even when Jinny said,

"Hester, beloved, I don't doubt it's largely that I'm peeved because I haven't made good here and I know it."

Jinny cried, when she left.

"Oh, Hester, you're so *innocent*, anyone can make you swallow anything whole! I feel wicked going away and leaving you here."

Except for this one thing the Freshman year ended in radiant glory.

Jay Oehrle was staying on for a week at Adamsville to finish his work at Jack the Cleaner's. He and Hester went to

all the trains to see "the last of the bunch" off. Then they sat out on the deserted steps of Blaine Hall in the moonlight until two o'clock, having the best and most serious of all their talks. Jay told her his ideals of a minister's career: He confided to her the details of a love affair with a girl in his home town who was teaching and sending him money to help him through college. Hester gave him earnest shy advice, with a delicious confidential feeling. They talked about what they meant to do next year.

Jay said.

"One thing I'm not going to do, I'm not going to kill time like I've let myself do sometimes this year, and I'm not going to stand for the other fellows in the house doing it. I tell you, we're here at Adams to *work*, and not to just work for ourselves but for the college—"

"Oh, I think that's *true*!" Hester cried eagerly, looking at him with shining trustful eyes in the ivy-shadowed moonlight.

Jay cleared his throat and looked out frowningly over the slope of dewy campus to where the black cinder paths lay edged with laburnum and bridal wreath. Hester sat beside him with her hands tightly clasped, worshiping the beauty.

She said.

"I think you're *right*. I feel that way, too. I feel as if this year I've done too much, and thought too much—well, just for myself. I know I haven't thought enough about Adams."

Jay declared.

"Well, if *you* haven't Hester, I certainly don't know anyone who has. I think you've got more of the real Adams spirit than any girl in the Freshman class."

His thin, dark, tense hand closed over hers as he spoke. She could not say just why the clasp began to make her uncomfortable. She twisted her hand slightly, and felt his fingers reach higher on her wrist. She sprang up a little breathlessly, cried with forced gaiety,

"If we don't go home Prexie'll be

getting the marshal after us!" and ran down the cinder path.

"Silly! What made me act like such a silly?" she berated herself afterward.

Her mother murmured, half awake, "Hester, where *were* you?"—moaned and turned back to sleep. Hester lay with open, radiant eyes, thrilling again over the talk with Jay, the partings, tears welling up when she thought of Jinny, and all the wonderful Seniors, gone . . . smelling again the odor of night and dew and bridal wreath on the campus . . . one beautiful year gone. . . .

CHAPTER IV

THAT summer seemed endlessly long and dull. Hot—every day worse than the one before. The nights were terrible. Hester and her mother did not pretend to do regular cooking. After a little lunch, they each took a bath, put on their nightgowns, and tried to read and sleep in the darkened back parlor until the worst heat of the day was over. At night, Hester hooked the screen door and lay down on one of the old cot mattresses before it. The Harris House attic was full of cot relics.

The town was nothing without the college people. How could she ever stand it until fall? She went again to the Christian Endeavor. Humphrey Dilley walked solemnly home with her. She and Humphrey had been in school together since the day when they had both started into kindergarten in the basement of the old Universalist church. Humphrey was one of the banker Dilleys, an old, loyal, solid Adamsville family. Hester knew that Humphrey was "a dandy good fellow," but it wasn't easy to talk to him, as it was to Jay and Bunty. They discoursed about their classmates and the prospects for next year.

"I had a letter from Rob."

"Oh, *did* you? What did he say?"

"Well—I don't know as anything specially interesting."

She tried to talk over candidates for

class officers and for next spring's *Pioneer* Board election with him; but although Humphrey was a good, solid member of the class, the kind who is elected treasurer, he could not exchange thrilling confidences over these things as Jay could. Humphrey was not a leader. Their talks always ended with:

"Well, it'll seem mighty good to see them all come back in the fall."

He tried with the most conscientious determination to keep in step with her as they went down the long tree-shadowed walk, frequently stopping to start over again. He was a big heavy-shouldered youth with a large, good, dull face and a massive wave of dark hair. A little too slow to make a football player. At the door he lingered and lingered, until he could finally utter the parting word—"Well, I expect it must be getting late."

"But then," Hester thought as she went in yawning, "Humphrey is such a *good* fellow, and I know I ought to be ashamed."

Fall came at last. That hottest week of all in September, when she helped her mother to clean the house, wash all the bedding, put up the cots and get the girls' rooms ready.

Jay came three days early to get his old job with Jack the Cleaner. Hester spent those three evenings with him, wandering about the campus while he outlined to her his plans for the class during the year, and she broke in with,

"Oh, won't it be glorious to see everybody! Jay, I don't see how I've lived through this summer."

They both felt the glory of being important members of their class.

Hester was already in all the activities that she could manage. She was on the committee for the Opening Reception. She promised to give Jay his choice of the Freshman girls. She wore a badge saying "Old Girl," and ran down to all the trains to meet new people and old. She did want to make the Freshman girls feel at home, feel that they had a place in Adams. She took Freshman girls to their rooming houses. They looked at her with ador-

ing eyes. They said, "If all Adams girls are like Hester Harris!"

She was so kind, so enthusiastic about everything, so full of the Adams spirit, telling them to think of her as a big sister and to ask her anything. She meant every word of this, meant it ardently. But she was wondering which ones would do for E. B. B., which was only second to Adams itself in her faith and love.

They were all pouring in now, more on every train. There was such a feeling now of old and tested intimacy with her classmates. Della, Ellen, Bess—Gertie more crazy than ever. Bob Alden cried,

"Hester, I've been watching for that smile all the way from Des Moines! How you was? I sure am tea-kettled stiff to see you."

They were all hilarious because the train had gone sailing past Big Bill on the platform at Winner, where only one local and one freight stopped. They told how he had tried to signal it frantically with a bandana. The boys said, grinning,

"Let's get up a reception gang, badges and horns and stuff, to meet old Bill when he comes into town in the caboose."

The station platform was stacked high with trunks, and everyone was trying to get a promise for quick delivery from Harvey Higgins. Embracings, shrieks—Hester had seen all this since she was a little girl, and now she was "in it."

All back but Jinny. She had thought that she would miss Jinny, and the Seniors, so terribly. But these first weeks were too full. Jinny had gone West suddenly and was teaching a country school, to which she had to ride six miles on horseback.

"Just to be doing something wild," she had written Hester. What a shame that Jinny hadn't come back and given herself a chance to make good.

Activities were so much more serious this year. It was the Adams ideal to go in for as many as possible, to sink the individual in the public good and

so advance the school spirit. Hester plunged into them all. She scampered about the campus trying to get items for her "try-out" for the "Blue and White" staff. She tried for the Dramatic Club, very ambitiously with "The quality of mercy is not strained."

Her voice was light, of course. She said, "Oh, I don't expect to make it, but I think as many ought to try out as can for the sake of the club."

She was hurt because Wade Brunner, a Senior, said that she read Portia's speech as if she were giving a talk to the Y. W. But then, Wade Brunner was a "crab." No one liked him because he was "so sarcastic." He thought that no one knew anything about dramatics but himself. Hester knew that she could not make the Girls' Glee Club (at this time an inferior organization, overshadowed by the Glee Club, as the men's organization was called). But she could sing well enough for the Oratorio Society, where all that was needed was to carry a tune, and she joined that. Even the German Club, made up largely of maidens who "had no other activities." She and Ellen had decided that some of the "girls who did things" ought to go into these organizations and raise the general tone. She was on every committee in the Sophomore class. It was "service," "doing something for Adams."

She worried a long time about joining the Volunteer Band. The German Club was merely obscure. But the Volunteer Band was "roasted in the Annual." She still kept her worship of Helen and John Fellows, still talked of going to China when school was over. She believed in carrying the Adams spirit to downtrodden lands. Then wasn't it her duty to join the Volunteer Band? She had long talks with Jay about it. He opposed it fiercely, with strong arguments.

"That's all very well, Hester. I honor you for feeling that way. I may decide to go to Asia or somewhere like that myself, although I think there's a big field right in this country. I tell you it would be about the grandest work a

man could do to carry the spirit of Adams over the world. But I'm opposed to seeing you join the Volunteer Band. Its purpose is good—I honor that—but it hasn't much of a standing, as an organization, in Adams. It hasn't the right kind of people."

"Oh, but Jay," Hester cried anxiously, "don't you think then some of us that believe in what it's doing ought to join it?"

"No, because we're putting our service into other organizations. You're doing a whole lot right now for the school through the Y. W. and all, and you can do more there."

Rob said,

"Gosh! I think the heat must have turned your brain this summer, girl. That bunch of pills. Leonard Stoner and Susie Dykes and Jesse Babcock. Wouldn't you look sweet among 'em? Well, maybe you could make a hit with Jesse. Is that your object?"

She felt guilty, but she was glad to have two fine earnest fellows like Jay and Rob, who had the best interests of the school at heart, advise her against joining the Band. There were Leonard Stoner and Susie Dykes, one of the school jokes as a couple—Leonard a little light wisp of a dried-up youth, Susie a big homely girl with flat feet and stiff black hair and prominent teeth. Jesse Babcock was the biggest "pill" in school, the one who was roasted in the *Pioneer*. Then there was that poor girl with the harelip—Hester always took special pains to "be nice to" her—and the little cripple, and other harmless but insignificant ones. She didn't belong with them, that was true. And of course she hadn't absolutely made up her mind to go to Asia—perhaps she oughtn't to bind herself.

After that eventless summer she wanted to go to everything. She accompanied the Harris House Freshman girls to the Dorm reception, which was chiefly useful for youths who wished to have a good view of the new girls.

Dorm receptions were always supposed to be dull. Hester went about "making people have a good time." She

was really shy about approaching strangers, but for an old girl to sit and talk to a few people whom she already knew would be too selfish. Mrs. Potter, the matron, "counted upon her to keep things going." Her shyness kept her from being officious, and colored her soft cheeks delicately. One gloomy Freshman youth sat in a corner, and his dark eyes followed her half sulkily. He listened to her little high, sweet, eager voice that was just the least bit breathless.

Hester said to the other girls:

"That poor fellow's been sitting there all evening and I don't believe anyone's said a word to him."

"Why don't you, then?"

"Well, I do think that someone ought to."

She promised to help Mrs. Potter to get some games going. They were all to play Wink 'Em. "Now I want every boy in this room to get behind a chair, and every girl to sit in a chair. Only Dick Johns. He can't have any girl in his chair."

"Why do you pick on me?" Dick wailed.

The girls seated themselves in the chairs with the aid of Mrs. Potter. A dozen boys wanted Hester. She called on her courage and spirit and slipped softly into the chair behind which the lonesome youth was gloomily standing. She felt a kind of reluctant thrill from the dark strong hands that hovered over her shoulders, closing down with a fearful grip when bashful Freshman boys winked gratefully in response to her shining, helpful eyes.

Then later she found herself near him at the frappé table. He silently brought her a carefully held cup of the reddish frappé. She talked brightly to him, trying to penetrate his gloom. They sat down in one of the long red-cushioned window seats in the big reception hall. She clasped her hands lightly and smiled helpfully at him, ready to respond.

"Do you like your classes? Whom did you get in Freshman English? Oh, it's too bad you didn't get Bunny, he's

so perfectly dear, I had him last year. But then, Professor Thurber's very good too. It's hard to start, isn't it? But then, I think Adams does more for its new students than any other school."

His silence intrigued her. She felt that she must enthuse, and rouse him from it. The beauties of the campus, the faculty, Prexie, the new crowd of girls in the Dorm, the fine spirit of the Freshman class. She was horrified when he said gloomily:

"Yes, it's all right if you just fall in with whatever anybody else does. It's all right if you get their 'attitude' but they don't want any fellow to have an attitude of his own."

"Oh, no! Oh, you don't understand Adams at all. They *want* people to think for themselves. That's what they *teach* people to do."

"Yes, sure, if it's just what they think they ought to think."

She exclaimed: "Oh, but you mustn't start right in criticizing! How can you expect to like things, or to have people like you, if you do that? That isn't the Adams spirit—it's to help and not hinder."

"Yes, but I want to have a pretty darn good idea of what I'm helping first."

"I don't see how you could have listened to Prexie's chapel talk and not know what you're helping!"

"Oh sure, Adams ideals that they all talk about—but a fellow's got to think about and decide these things for himself."

Hester explained and defended Adams with loving enthusiasm. She was flattered in some obscure way by his silent gloomy regard which she could not quite fathom. And besides, she must not let a Freshman get the wrong idea of the school. He was a dark boy, with thick swart black hair and a wide mouth that seemed at the same time sensitive, hurt and bitterly satirical. He wore a cheap, black, ready-made suit and careless scuffed shoes. He told her that he had been working on a farm all summer. She could see that his dark

sunburned hands were scarred. But he had none of the uncouthness that offended her in Big Bill. She did not learn his name. When she left the Dorm, she found him silently beside her in the dusk. The other girls went hurrying on ahead of them, and she heard giggles and whispers.

The girls were all waiting for her, in their kimonos, massed on the stairs.

They chorused: "Hester! Are you trying to do missionary work? Where did you pick him up?"

Hester said, a little nettled, "Why? isn't he all right? I don't know who he is—from Adam."

"That's that Joe Forrest. That's that nut that wouldn't join the Y. M. and invited Summer Grant to leave his room. Is *that* what you pick up when we aren't there to take care of you! I never thought it of Hester."

"Girls, she was sitting on the window seat talking away to him—I thought she must be trying to convert him."

"Look out — you're getting her fussed."

"Well, I don't care," Hester said, "he wasn't a bit bad to talk to."

It made her feel foolish, though, that she had been so interested in him, and wondered so who he was. That Joe Forrest. She had heard the boys talking about him, saying that a little session with the Damme Club some dark night wouldn't hurt that guy. He might change his tune if they kept him up a tree for a while in his night shirt. He needn't think he could come here and criticize. Who was he anyway? His father was a preacher in a little burg named Pitt. Fred Loomis knew him. Said he'd always been like that—always been "ornery."

Hester felt strangely conscious when she heard the boys talking about him. Rob said he had only made that fuss about not joining the Y. M. to get some notoriety. All the fellows joined the Y. M.—it didn't necessarily mean they had to attend every meeting, or believe every word that was said, either. Lots of good fellows didn't take part. "But this guy had to show off."

Hester said nervously, "Oh, I'm not defending him. But I do think you boys ought to give him more of a chance before you do anything to him. If you'd go and talk to him—I don't think he really means all those things."

"Well, he's starting in with the wrong notions of what he's going to do, I'll tell you, and it wouldn't hurt him any to get a little of it licked out of him."

For a time the advent of Joe Forrest made quite a commotion. He was the only youth who had ever refused point-blank to affiliate with the Y. M. C. A. when he entered Adams—almost an automatic act. Even if a fellow "didn't take much active part" it "gave him a good standing." If Joe Forrest remained until his Junior year, he would be the sole youth who did not have the letters Y. M. C. A. printed after his name in the *Pioneer*, saving letters for those who could claim no other activity. Of course it wasn't that alone. He didn't have the right spirit. He was a knocker. Adams had no use for a fellow like that. For a time, whenever members of the Damme Club—the college punitive society—were seen in conclave, people said, "I bet they'll do something to that Joe Forrest tonight."

But Joe Forrest, after his spectacular entrance, slipped back into obscurity. People let him alone and he let them alone. He seemed to have retired into a state of gloomy silence and inaccessibility. The boys in his rooming house—an unimportant little house on the wrong side of the campus—declared that he was "a mighty good guy" and that "they liked old Joe." He was a good student, a "shark," and only occasionally asked disconcerting questions that made people remember that the Damme Club had never dealt with him. "Oh, he makes me tired," was what was said of him now. But he no longer seemed important enough to concern the Damme Club. He was simply a dark, shabby, taciturn boy, something of a grind, who didn't go out for athletics.

Hester sometimes saw him around the library or crossing the campus. He gave her a feeling of uneasiness, almost

of guilt. She had never followed up that "earnest" talk she had had with him. She was ashamed. She would not admit, even to herself, the thrill that she felt when those dark hands had suddenly clamped down upon her shoulder and forced her back into her chair. How dreadful. . . .

Hester and Jay Oehrle took fewer walks and talks together this year. Jay was still prominent, but he had lost a little of his Freshman eminence. People "got tired of his trying to run everything." Hester was with Bunty Peterson oftener.

Big Bill had come into sudden and immense popularity among the other boys. The boys at his rooming house had "got him tamed down a little." His coat sleeves now reached his hands and his front locks were disciplined. Of course he was "always up to something" and couldn't be taken seriously. Hester—remembering John Fellows, slight, fair-haired, fine-featured—could not help feeling an uncouthness and disconcerting levity in Big Bill. She laughed at his practical jokes—as when he attended the Sophomore fancy dress party in the gym as the Bride of the Mistletoe—but still he was not quite what she thought of as the Adams type. There was still a good deal of "taming down" to be done. Oh, she liked Bill, no one could help liking him. But she was glad to accept Bunty's invitation for the Glee Club concert early in the year and fend off Bill's bid.

During the second semester she found that Joe Forrest was in her Poly. Sci. class. It was a sleepy class, conducted by an aged, learned and kindly man, and elected as a "snap" by a large medley of assorted students. No one was expected to do anything in it. But Joe Forrest, although he sat silent and bored most of the time, slumped far down in a chair and digging with his pencil at the initials and fancy designs carved in the desk arm, would sometimes come out startlingly with those sharp, disconcerting questions.

Hester made good grades in Poly. Sci. and kept up her notebook. She was always a conscientious student. It was a joke among the boys to flunk Poly. Sci.—almost an honor—but it would not have done for a girl. Of course she didn't take it seriously, like Major History and Applied Christianity. She was horrified at some of the statements that Joe Forrest made. He "liked to argue," as the boys said. But at the same time she was always conscious of him sitting in the back of the room among two rows of boys who handed about sacks of "red hots" and looked on each others' notebooks. His face was dark against the light from the long windows.

She always had that uneasy feeling of guilt that had troubled her since the Dorm reception. She would try to speak to him. She did one day, a little breathlessly, as they were leaving class.

"Did you hear what Professor Duke assigned for Tuesday?"

He stared at her, and told her. She felt herself blush hotly, until she saw with what care he was opening his notebook and finding the assignment. A few days later he was near her when they left class. He lingered with an air of indifferent carelessness and walked down the long hall with her. Then he began walking back to the library with her.

The girls said lightly, "You must have made a hit with our friend the crab."

At the Glee Club concert, she looked brightly about, telling Bunty, "I wanted to see where Ellen and Tad were sitting." . . . Joe Forrest wasn't there, even as an usher.

He always sat across from her in the library now. When she left the building, he got up after a moment, still with that indifferent air, and followed her, coming up with her suddenly just as she paused on the stone steps outside. They discovered that they were in different divisions of the same Latin class. Hester was pleased to have Joe ask her questions about constructions,

which she always worked out faithfully. Joe was "a shark," but only in things that "he could see some sense in taking." He could see no sense in taking Latin. Since he was required to take it, at least he wouldn't study the stuff, wouldn't pretend that he did. He and Hester began "getting their Latin together," she with the constructions all conscientiously learned, he with no preparation but frequently able to throw light upon something that had puzzled her. There was a grassy place beyond the library where Hester liked to sit to study in the spring. Now Joe always sat there with her. She argued with him the value of ancient languages. There was a kind of fearful pleasure in hearing the statements that he made.

She knew that people were saying, "Honestly, is Hester Harris going with that Joe Forrest?"

Joe was no longer conspicuously obstreperous. He had the respect of several of his professors, the liking of a few boys who knew him intimately. But his reputation was settled as that of "a grouch," "a crab." He seemed to be absolutely the wrong person for Hester Harris.

Hester's arguments with him all settled now about the definition of the Adams spirit and of "Adams ideals."

"The Adams spirit is the spirit of 'pure democracy.' You know very well that you girls wouldn't take that poor kid with the harelip into E. B. B. You know that if any fellow got her name for a party he'd slide out of taking her."

He said, "It's all this simply falling in with things and talking about 'em as settled facts, when you don't know what they are or whether you believe 'em or not, that I'm talking about. . . . You girls at the Y. W., you just repeat the same stuff over and over and never stop to find out whether you understand a word of it. Winnie Parker, down on the poster to lead your Y. W. on the subject of 'Honesty in Little Things,' and then goes and sits by poor old Susie Dykes every day in German

so that she can copy her written work."

Hester made an almost tearful defense. She knew what the others would say. "Why do you take the trouble to argue with a grouch like that? What do you care what he says?"

But she was most ardently anxious to convert Joe. She cried, "Well, I know some of the girls do things like that—we all do things we shouldn't—but then, most of them *are* sincere. Winnie's just one instance."

"Sure. But it's this taking things for granted that gets me."

She tried to defend her own sincerity.

He looked at her. "Gosh! I know you believe the whole business, Hester. You believe everything, don't you? Poor kid."

"Why, Joe! I do believe it—of course I do. I just wish I could make you see what I mean by these things."

She knew that the right was on her side—that he was just using little unimportant instances to put her off—but she hated this constant pinning her down to exact definitions. "Well, what do you mean by 'democracy'—if it isn't that? Just what do you mean? What are 'Adams ideals'? 'Service'—serve what? And how and why, and where's it going to get you?" Hester cried in despair, "You have to *feel* these things, Joe. You can't define them in so many words."

"Well, how you going to make me feel them?"

Once he burst out: "Gosh! People can act the way they please for all I care. It's this damn sugaring things over that gets me, all around here. It was just the same in my dad's church. Have to hit every nail just a little on the slant."

But she liked Joe so well, "in spite of the way he talked." She wanted to "change his viewpoint about these things," to "make him see things in a better light." A kind of intimacy had unconsciously grown between them. Joe told her things that made her feel that she could understand him better. He was the alien among four step-brothers and sisters. He "wasn't happy

at home." His father wanted him to do one thing and he wanted to do another. He hated Pitt, but he loved the woods and the river.

She was more than flattered—touched and stirred—by these confidences. They sat out in their own little grassy spot near the cool stone foundation of the "lib," Joe looking down at the ground and poking at it with a little stick as he talked. He said that she was "the only one he'd tell about these things." She felt his sensitiveness and loneliness under his armor of hurt callow cynicism and "orneriness." And yet there was something mature about Joe, something that the minds of the other boys didn't have. His cynicism, his occasional rudeness, his angry bluntness, wounded her. He told her, when she was elected to the *Pioneer* Board, "You know you don't even pretend to write. Susie Dykes can write a darn sight better than you can, Hester, and you know it. You got on on the platform of general compliance." Yet there was something almost childlike, oddly grateful and shy, in the way that he turned to her softness and gentleness and responsiveness. That little eager, trustful way of hers. It seemed to soften the harsh, bleak outlines of things, and he wanted it even while he mocked at it. There was all the special pleasure, too, of being the chosen one of someone who cared for few people.

"Hester Harris and Joe Forrest! What's Hester thinking of! What on earth does she see in him!"

But with the spring, it was seen to be "a case." They were constantly together. The girls in the Harris House declared that it was no use trying to talk Hester out of it, they believed Joe had a kind of power over her. She did the things that he loved to do—went with him on long tramps into the woods near Adamsville, instead of driving out in picnic parties of four. She read the books that he picked out for her in the library, although some of them seemed "terrible." He would not stay in the parlor of the Harris House, declaring that he could not stand Dolly Rowen

and Fred Davis, who had "a terrible case" and and sat in the corner in melting-eyed silence. He and Hester walked until they were tired, and then stayed out under the birch tree talking.

He was going to come back next year because of Hester.

CHAPTER V

JOE went out through Iowa and South Dakota during the summer selling paring knives. He made enough to start him at Adams the next year. He wrote Hester letters with little odd, appealing strains of boyishness cropping out. She agonized over whether she "ought to keep on going with him next year." When he came back, his dark, thin, strong face with the black hair fascinated her as it had done before. Joe got a job working in the Vienna Café, one long room with a counter and stools and a row of "drug store tables," the ceiling festooned with ancient red and green tissue paper.

Their career as "a couple" was stormy and fitful this year. Hester was always breaking it off, to the satisfaction of the girls. Then after a period of lonely agonized weeping, it would be on again.

Hester had looked forward to the *Pioneer* Board as the pinnacle of her college course. She could never forget the glorious times that Alma's Board had had, that had seemed so wonderful to a small sister. That was when Alma had got to know Herschel, whom she had later married. That little sacred room on the third floor of Recitation Hall where the Annual Board met had been her goal. '03 had a wonderful Board. Gertie, Ellen, Bess, Bunty. Rob Alden was editor-in-chief. Bunty Peterson was business manager. Big Bill was on the Board. He was editor of the joke department. If it had not been for Joe, Hester might have "gone with" Bunty. He was a slim alert boy with "lots of the right spirit," a leader of mass meetings. More personally attractive than Jay, not such a clown as Bill. Everyone said that he and Hester would "make a

grand couple." Why did she have to stick around with Joe?

The boys talked to her, when she and Joe were temporarily "off." They told her that they had nothing against Joe Forrest, that he had brains, but he was a knocker, a crab, not her kind. A fellow like that did nothing to help the school. It "made them tired" that she had always turned down Big Bill, and then would go with a fellow like Joe who wasn't anything in school.

She knew that everything was different this year because of Joe. She had got him to "go in for debate," but she sometimes felt that he had had more influence with her than she with him. She could not go in for things as fervently and innocently as she had always done. Echoes of Joe's sarcasms stayed with her. She did not enjoy the *Pioneer* Board as she had expected to do. Joe was jealous of Bunty, even while he scorned him, declaring that Bunty was the worst bluffer in school, that he'd talk just the same about any "set of ideals" that happened to be on tap where he happened to be, that he was out for Bunty Peterson and nothing else. "Bluff" was Joe's great word that year. He was seeing bluff everywhere. He worried Hester by declaring that debates were mostly bluffing, too.

"You want to be smart, not wise, to win a debate," he said. "Sure it's bluff— isn't your whole object to pretend there's no truth on the other side, when you know there is?"

Junior year, with all its importance and prestige, was not at all what she had thought it would be. Their tempestuous career was followed with disapproval, but intense interest by the girls in the Harris House. The few of these whom Joe liked stood up for him violently, the others detested the sight of him. But they all agreed that he and Hester were "a queer couple." Hester and Joe had desperate disputes. When they were at enmity, Hester could not study, could not work, burst into strange fits of weeping. He was always wounding her most cherished

beliefs—bitterly and consciously, she thought in agony—and then being sorry when it was too late.

"Joe, it seems to me that you deliberately try to hurt one of the deepest beliefs in my life."

"Belief—but why do you believe it?"

"Why, because—why, because I *do*."

"That's just what I'm saying. You've never thought about it at all. You just take all they cram down your throat. Gosh, Hester, you'd believe anybody. What I'm objecting to is acting as if Prexie was the Pope, sitting on the chapel platform sending out bulls. Prexie's a darn good chapel speaker, and he's a darn good money-getter, too. Has to be. His right hand and his left aren't always on speaking terms. Well, that's all right, it's his job—but don't try to make him infallible."

"Joe Forrest! You don't understand Prexie. No wonder you've got the reputation of being a knocker."

"Sure! That's just what I'm talking about. Slide over everything and never take a straight look at anything—might see something. That's my point exactly. Fellow doesn't swallow everything in one big lump, and then he's a knocker."

"Well, you are a knocker. I try to say you aren't when people call you that—"

"Well, why should you say I'm not if you think I am?"

"Joe! Oh, this is hopeless. Why do we ever try to agree?"

He answered gloomily, "Why do we?" But after that he would show his contrition for hurting her. He would say, "You believe things so darn hard, Hester. I'm afraid you're going to get an awful jolt some day. It scares me."

The Adams way was to trust fervently, without reserves. Joe had to question into everything. He "couldn't let anything alone." Criticism was "crabbing," and he was always criticizing. He said that he wasn't going to be fed with pre-digested ideals, like Mellins Food, whether they were good for him or not. That it wasn't the business of a college to "teach ideals,"

anyway—just to lay the facts before you and let you make your own deductions. That you weren't here to "do things for the school"—that stood to reason—but to make use of the school.

He criticized the Adams heroes and great men. Jay Oehrle was his pet aversion—and Joe took pleasure in his aversions. Jay—slender, dark, intense—rubbed Joe all the wrong way. Jay's ferocious earnestness about class politics and "spirit," his political maneuvering, his speeches, his officiousness—Joe hadn't a good word for him.

"Look at his mouth," he said once to Hester, "if you want to find out what the Reverend Jay is like."

The worst of it was that she couldn't help noticing Jay's mouth. She knew that it had that vague something that had always repelled her. A kind of tortured sensuality—poor Jay, it told all too much about him. Although Hester didn't recognize it as that, only as "something she didn't like." It made her remember that night on the steps of Blaine Hall. Hester tried to defend Jay against Joe—but after that she shrank from having Jay near her. Joe's comments were always affecting her that way, and she thought that it was wrong, that she wasn't "seeing the best in people" as she should.

But Joe was not one of those who rejoiced when Jay Oehrle failed by three votes to make the *Pioneer* Board, a thing for which he had been maneuvering since his Freshman year. He said that it was mean to beat a fellow out of something he'd set his heart on. Sure, he was "a politician." Only not so slick as some of the others.

Joe and Hester had some wonderfully happy hours in the fall, when Joe rented one of the old livery teams and they went out to Sandy Creek for an all-day picnic. They sat in the long coarse grass on the shaggy bank of the creek, in an open place ringed about with oak trees. Joe brought out of his pocket a small, thumbled copy of "The Rubaiyat," which was then his Bible. Hester would not admit that she liked the sentiment—she didn't

think it was "a sorry scheme of things" and she didn't want to smash it—but the rhythm was lovely. "A book of verses underneath a bough"—that she liked. Joe told her about the times when he had camped out in the woods "when he was a kid." They had a bonfire and roasted wieners and marshmallows, and then Joe blew up the sacks.

Joe was "a kid still" in some ways, in spite of his maturity in others. When Hester quarreled with him, he had to do something to prove how bad he was. It was one of those silly, childish things that caused the final trouble. Joe had scoffed at the idea of activities being "service." He told Hester that she went into activities because it was the thing to do, and she couldn't bear not to be approved and popular. And that was all right, if she felt that way—only why call it "service"? Poor Hester denied, and then agonized over whether there wasn't truth in it. They went on to quarrel. She charged Joe with callousness and showy defiance. The next day, to prove her case, he appeared upon the campus smoking a big cigar.

Men were permitted to smoke in their rooms—unless their landladies banished them to the cellar—but not on the streets or campus. Joe was summoned to the President's office. It was not just the offense—his "attitude was wrong." There was no rule about chapel attendance—merely a tradition—but Joe was never there. He had openly scorned the Y. M. C. A. It was the "attitude" which all these things revealed. "Prexie Jim" was a warm-hearted, impulsive, autocratic man whose attitude was wholly personal. Joe knew that he could have "worked Prexie's sympathies," he saw clearly and coolly the exact way to do it—but some perversity, perhaps a little disdain, held him back. He felt uncomfortably that he liked Prexie, liked even his hastiness, if he hated to admit it. He had "knocked" Prexie because Hester thought she must worship him as a god.

Joe went back across the campus to his little room and began packing immediately. When the other boys came in, he told them coolly that he was "canned." Oh, of course Prexie called it "suspension," but he was not coming back, so why not simply say "canned"?

But he was not cool. His hands—red from the dishwater at the Vienna Café—shook a little. His old feeling of being a "lone wolf" had forced him into defiance. He had said that he hated Adams—but it was not easy to leave it. He had a queer underlying, unspoken love for the campus, the cinder paths, the big, dark clump of evergreens on the south, the little palegreen birches on the north, the tree-lined road to Sandy Creek, the big birch in front of the Harris House, even the noisy, smelly Vienna Café, where the boys shouted—"Hey, Joe! Hurry up with those sandwiches!" He could not believe that he was going. He would not believe anything until he had talked with Hester. He had a feeling that she would force him out of his perversity, that that would give him an excuse for going back to Prexie. He wanted to tell her that he had been a crazy fool.

The first that Hester heard of it was in the library—"Joe Forrest is canned for smoking on the campus!" She was in an agony of humiliation. If Joe could deliberately get into trouble for such a silly thing as that, he could not care for her. Everyone was eying her, wondering how she was taking it, whether she sympathized with Joe. People were "called up"—for dancing, for Sunday dates. Even Rob. There was no disgrace, even a little swaggering glory, in that. She, too, felt that it was Joe's "general attitude." He didn't care for Adams or for its ideals, he was bitter and a pessimist and a crab, as the boys had told her. He had hurt her too terribly.

When she came hurrying off the campus from her 3:15 class, she saw Joe, with pretended carelessness, hanging about near the big oak. She knew that he was waiting to speak to her. She was instantly aware, as

always, of his dark eyes and carelessly tossed black hair. But she was still too terribly hurt to look at him. She went straight on past, talking vivaciously with the other girls, pretending that she hadn't seen him, although her cheeks were flushed. She knew when he turned sharply away and went off across the campus.

He left town that night without a word to her. He preferred to consider his suspension "canning," and did not come back.

The other girls, and the boys on the *Pioneer* Board, were kind to Hester. She was grateful for their trying to show her that they were glad to have her back as one of them. They speculated as to whether Hester and Joe had been engaged—whether she heard from him. But to her they never mentioned Joe. She did not speak of him.

She flung herself again into "activities" that spring, with a kind of revulsion against Joe and all that he had said. She had a feeling of having returned to the fold. She went passionately back to her old beliefs. She entered into things feverishly, trying not to give herself time to remember last spring. There was the day when the *Pioneers* came out. She helped Bunty and Big Bill "get up the stunt." They got an old covered wagon, and the boys scoured the country for oxen, renting them finally from an old farmer near Sandy Creek; and they made a gratifying commotion driving upon the campus, the girls dressed in calico and old sunbonnets, the boys in broad-brimmed hats. They handed out the *Pioneers* from the back of the wagon. Big Bill wore a false beard and overalls, with an enormous plug of tobacco sticking out of his pocket, and he led the oxen. "The cleverest *Pioneer* stunt ever pulled off." Afterward, the Board, still in wide-brimmed hats and sunbonnets, went to the Vienna Café for refreshment. Hester talked and laughed animatedly to smother that feeling that Joe must come in a moment from the swinging kitchen door. She let Big Bill take her home—he was now the only

unattached male member of the *Pioneer Board*—and they sat on the steps of the Harris House all evening, refusing to move to let anyone pass them.

There was such a comfort in going back into orthodoxy, in being "one of the bunch" again.

Commencement was so beautiful—the lilacs, the bridal wreath, the girls in white, the June evenings. Hester returned to it all in passionate devotion. How could anyone criticize Adams? She felt the Adams spirit all about her. She served frappé at the President's reception, on the lawn of his old yellow stone house, she ushered at the Commencement exercises in the Congregational church. She won second prize in the Girls' Extemporaneous Speaking Contest, with "What Adams Ideals Mean to Its Women." She did not have a good voice for speaking, but her devotion, and her ardent, shining eyes, her almost tearful earnestness, made one of the judges mark her first.

She "went to things alone" this Commencement. Bunty was now devoted to Ellen, who was the most prominent girl in the Junior class. Big Bill was going to sell "The Century Book of Facts" that summer and did not stay for Commencement. Hester went with her mother to hear the Glee Club sing on the campus. The Glee Club sat on the steps of Blaine Hall, and on the grassy slope before them was a scattered mass of people. The great trees stood duskily motionless. There was a scent of flowers and dew. Hester sat on the cushion that her mother had urged her to bring, pulling at the cool grass blades and listening silently to the cadences of the songs in the evening air. Tears kept welling up in her eyes. This was the first night when she had admitted that she was lonely for Joe. She had been with him last year. He had spread down his coat for her. She remembered the line of his shoulders as he sat beside her, and his dark lifted profile.

There was the long, hot, dull summer. She felt that she must struggle,

that she must put Joe out of her heart. She could not bear to see the grassy place beyond the library, across the street, where she and Joe had sat to "get their Latin together." She felt a dry agony of waiting, every morning, until the postman came. But when he finally did bring a letter from Joe she half hated to open it.

For a while they wrote constantly. Joe had gone to Des Moines and got a newspaper job. The newspaper business was "all bluff," but then so was about everything else. He wanted to come to Adamsville and see Hester. He knew that he had acted like a fool in going off that way. Hester decided and re-decided, lay awake at night and agonized. She was torn between Joe and her beliefs. She wrote him finally that "it had been a mistake." She cried through half the night, but after that she felt a kind of peace. She had returned to her old loyalties. Next year would be her Senior year. She had conquered herself. She would give the college, this year, all that she had.

CHAPTER VI

SENIOR year.

Hester took her old place in the class. Everyone knew now that "it was all off between her and Joe." She did not have the presidency of the Y. W. C. A. Ellen had that. But she was given an important position on the cabinet. It was service that counted, not what she had for herself. She had lost prestige a little because of Joe. But she got it back now as one of the prominent Senior girls. She tried to make devotion to her class and college take the place of Joe. She had more than she could do, which was one of the Adams ideals. She was overworked, as a prominent Senior should be. A little thin now, her early bloom already fading, girlish but without the appealing, innocent, joyous trustfulness of her Freshman days. Her enthusiasm was a little less spontaneous now, her smile—"Hester's smile"—just the least bit conscious, and there were two fine curved lines beside

Joe went back across the campus to his little room and began packing immediately. When the other boys came in he told them coolly that he was "canned." Oh, of course Prexie called it "suspension," but he was not coming back, so why not simply say "canned"?

But he was not cool. His hands—red from the dishwater at the Vienna Café—shook a little. His old feeling of being a "lone wolf" had forced him into defiance. He had said that he hated Adams—but it was not easy to leave it. He had a queer underlying, unspoken love for the campus, the cinder paths, the big, dark clump of evergreens on the south, the little palegreen birches on the north, the tree-lined road to Sandy Creek, the big birch in front of the Harris House, even the noisy, smelly Vienna Café, where the boys shouted—"Hey, Joe! Hurry up with those sandwiches!" He could not believe that he was going. He would not believe anything until he had talked with Hester. He had a feeling that she would force him out of his perversity, that that would give him an excuse for going back to Prexie. He wanted to tell her that he had been a crazy fool.

The first that Hester heard of it was in the library—"Joe Forrest is canned for smoking on the campus!" She was in an agony of humiliation. If Joe could deliberately get into trouble for such a silly thing as that, he could not care for her. Everyone was eying her, wondering how she was taking it, whether she sympathized with Joe. People were "called up"—for dancing, for Sunday dates. Even Rob. There was no disgrace, even a little swaggering glory, in that. She, too, felt that it was Joe's "general attitude." He didn't care for Adams or for its ideals, he was bitter and a pessimist and a crab, as the boys had told her. He had hurt her too terribly.

When she came hurrying off the campus from her 3:15 class, she saw Joe, with pretended carelessness, hanging about near the big oak. She knew that he was waiting to speak to her. She was instantly aware, as

always, of his dark eyes and carelessly tossed black hair. But she was still too terribly hurt to look at him. She went straight on past, talking vivaciously with the other girls, pretending that she hadn't seen him, although her cheeks were flushed. She knew when he turned sharply away and went off across the campus.

He left town that night without a word to her. He preferred to consider his suspension "canning," and did not come back.

The other girls, and the boys on the *Pioneer* Board, were kind to Hester. She was grateful for their trying to show her that they were glad to have her back as one of them. They speculated as to whether Hester and Joe had been engaged—whether she heard from him. But to her they never mentioned Joe. She did not speak of him.

She flung herself again into "activities" that spring, with a kind of revulsion against Joe and all that he had said. She had a feeling of having returned to the fold. She went passionately back to her old beliefs. She entered into things feverishly, trying not to give herself time to remember last spring. There was the day when the *Pioneers* came out. She helped Bunty and Big Bill "get up the stunt." They got an old covered wagon, and the boys scoured the country for oxen, renting them finally from an old farmer near Sandy Creek; and they made a gratifying commotion driving upon the campus, the girls dressed in calico and old sunbonnets, the boys in broad-brimmed hats. They handed out the *Pioneers* from the back of the wagon. Big Bill wore a false beard and overalls, with an enormous plug of tobacco sticking out of his pocket, and he led the oxen. "The cleverest *Pioneer* stunt ever pulled off." Afterward, the Board, still in wide-brimmed hats and sunbonnets, went to the Vienna Café for refreshment. Hester talked and laughed animatedly to smother that feeling that Joe must come in a moment from the swinging kitchen door. She let Big Bill take her home—he was now the only

unattached male member of the *Pioneer Board*—and they sat on the steps of the Harris House all evening, refusing to move to let anyone pass them.

There was such a comfort in going back into orthodoxy, in being "one of the bunch" again.

Commencement was so beautiful—the lilacs, the bridal wreath, the girls in white, the June evenings. Hester returned to it all in passionate devotion. How could anyone criticize Adams? She felt the Adams spirit all about her. She served frappé at the President's reception, on the lawn of his old yellow stone house, she ushered at the Commencement exercises in the Congregational church. She won second prize in the Girls' Extemporaneous Speaking Contest, with "What Adams Ideals Mean to Its Women." She did not have a good voice for speaking, but her devotion, and her ardent, shining eyes, her almost tearful earnestness, made one of the judges mark her first.

She "went to things alone" this Commencement. Bunty was now devoted to Ellen, who was the most prominent girl in the Junior class. Big Bill was going to sell "The Century Book of Facts" that summer and did not stay for Commencement. Hester went with her mother to hear the Glee Club sing on the campus. The Glee Club sat on the steps of Blaine Hall, and on the grassy slope before them was a scattered mass of people. The great trees stood duskily motionless. There was a scent of flowers and dew. Hester sat on the cushion that her mother had urged her to bring, pulling at the cool grass blades and listening silently to the cadences of the songs in the evening air. Tears kept welling up in her eyes. This was the first night when she had admitted that she was lonely for Joe. She had been with him last year. He had spread down his coat for her. She remembered the line of his shoulders as he sat beside her, and his dark lifted profile.

There was the long, hot, dull summer. She felt that she must struggle,

that she must put Joe out of her heart. She could not bear to see the grassy place beyond the library, across the street, where she and Joe had sat to "get their Latin together." She felt a dry agony of waiting, every morning, until the postman came. But when he finally did bring a letter from Joe she half hated to open it.

For a while they wrote constantly. Joe had gone to Des Moines and got a newspaper job. The newspaper business was "all bluff," but then so was about everything else. He wanted to come to Adamsville and see Hester. He knew that he had acted like a fool in going off that way. Hester decided and re-decided, lay awake at night and agonized. She was torn between Joe and her beliefs. She wrote him finally that "it had been a mistake." She cried through half the night, but after that she felt a kind of peace. She had returned to her old loyalties. Next year would be her Senior year. She had conquered herself. She would give the college, this year, all that she had.

CHAPTER VI

SENIOR year.

Hester took her old place in the class. Everyone knew now that "it was all off between her and Joe." She did not have the presidency of the Y. W. C. A. Ellen had that. But she was given an important position on the cabinet. It was service that counted, not what she had for herself. She had lost prestige a little because of Joe. But she got it back now as one of the prominent Senior girls. She tried to make devotion to her class and college take the place of Joe. She had more than she could do, which was one of the Adams ideals. She was overworked, as a prominent Senior should be. A little thin now, her early bloom already fading, girlish but without the appealing, innocent, joyous trustfulness of her Freshman days. Her enthusiasm was a little less spontaneous now, her smile—"Hester's smile"—just the least bit conscious, and there were two fine curved lines beside

her lips. Most of the Freshman girls admired her. With her spirit, enthusiasm, loyalty, sweetness, she was "an ideal Adams girl." There were a few, however, who spoke slightly of "the Y. W. smile."

Hester was the only girl chosen to speak at the mass-meeting before the Billings game. In spite of the lightness of her voice, and her slight presence, every one told her that the speech was "wonderful." It was her spirit, her belief in what she said. A slim figure in a blue sweater and a dark skirt, so girlish up there on the platform in the big, echoing gym—leaning slightly toward her audience, her eyes shining with eager enthusiasm, her fine light hair fastened with amber combs, her lips parted, speaking with such ardor that her slender throat tightened, "giving herself out." . . .

"People, it isn't just the team that's going to win this game—it's every one of us. The team will do their best—we know that—but they must feel, we must *make* them feel—that every man and every girl in Adams is right there back of them—every minute. And I know they will be, because they're Adams men and women. And people, if we want our team to win for us, it isn't enough to *feel* enthusiasm—we must *show* it. Girls, *don't* be afraid to yell tomorrow. What if you do make your throats a little sore? A sore throat will be a badge of honor after that game! We girls can't go into the game—we can't risk broken collar-bones and broken arms—well, then, we oughtn't to be afraid to risk our voices!

"People, we know our team is light. They haven't the weight that some other teams have; they haven't the brute strength. But they do have one thing that no other team can boast. They have the Adams spirit. And *that's* what will win tomorrow's game!

"People"—her voice quivered—"when I look at our boys, I don't feel that I'm simply looking at eleven men—I feel that I'm looking at the Adams spirit made visible."

She turned quickly and stretched out

her arms to the football team, sitting rigid and shamefaced on the platform. Her eager voice broke as she quoted, in the breathless silence of the building:

"Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee—

*Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers,
our tears,*

*Our faith triumphant over fears—
Are all with thee, are all with thee!"*

Jay Oehrle leaped upon the platform. His voice was already strained and husky from four years of yell-leading, but he forced it fiercely into service. Small, thin, dusky-sallow, a lock of black hair tumbling over his wildly screwed forehead, waving his arms frantically, he led the cheering with even more than his old savage ardor. His strained, hoarse voice, that was at times only a harsh breath, added to the effect.

"Now, people, all together—oh, yell, YELL—you aren't YELLING!

Adams we cry!

Adams we cry!

Adams! Adams!

Do or die!

". . . And now for Hester, people, YELL!"

It was a serious, responsible year. The Y. W., E. B. B., the college spirit, were all felt to rest upon the shoulders of the chosen few—Ellen, Hester, Bess, Margaret, Gertie.

Jay was still a leader, but he was not liked. Rob had steadily kept his popularity, and so had Bunty. Everyone liked Big Bill. Now that he was sure that "there was nothing between her and Joe," his old devotion to Hester began to crop up again. But—besides his being so immense and awkward—it seemed to her that he was not earnest enough over things, that he turned the most serious things into a joke. Of course, Adams had improved Bill immensely, as everyone said. But he did not seem quite the type of Adams man. There were still crudities about him, and there was that love for "acting the fool."

Bunty and Ellen were engaged. Rob was rushing a Freshman girl. Hester had scattering dates, but no longer her reckless Freshman popularity. She felt that she had climbed into a region of grave responsibilities. She knew that Jay wanted to confide in her again, tell her about the mysterious girl at home—but somehow, since what Joe had said, she evaded Jay.

It was time to "begin thinking about next year." Hester wanted, as they all did, to use her Adams ideals for the service of humanity. She thought of a dozen things—of "going into Y. W. work," of social settlements. Just teaching wasn't enough. Prexie meant more than that when he spoke of "going out to larger service." Her brother Russell was out of social service work now and in the insurance business. He wrote her "for the Lord's sake not to get into anything like that." She and her mother felt that Russell was not the same. Something had embittered him. Perhaps he was not happy in his second marriage. Frances, his first wife, his Adams classmate, had died. Her old ideal of taking the Adams spirit to Asia had been founded upon the vision of herself as helpmate for a John Fellows, as Helen had done. To go alone was so lonely and perilous, and it was not what girls like herself did. But she did want to "really do something."

It was so hard to find just the thing—to find it and do it. There seemed to be nothing but teaching, after all. She put in her teaching application with the other girls, had her picture taken looking very severe to impress superintendents of schools with her dignity. She and the other girls mourned: "Oh, girls! Just three months and it'll be all over! What shall we do?"

It seemed to her that she had never really contemplated anything beyond college. How could she leave Adams? She had grown up, really, in the school.

She went with Bill to the Glee Club concert that year. He said that he'd realized one ambition, at least, before he left school. He was proud of her little girlish, simple semi-evening dress. She still fulfilled his honest notions of

what he called "the i-deal Adams girl." With her eagerness, her earnestness, her sweet smile, her innocence, her girlish slightness. After the maidens of Winner, she was a vision of refinement and "culture" to him. Some of the Freshman girls thought that "he wasn't the one for her," but still they made "a grand Senior couple."

The Glee Club "stunt" that year included a song of the Senior girls, among other local hits. All the favorites—Ellen, Margaret, Bess, Jessie, Hester. Pride shone all over Big Bill's face when they sang:

*"Oh, Hester Harris,
Sweetest of all we know,
Your smile shines brighter
Far than the sunshine's glow."*

It was not possible that she was going away from it all. Her last Glee Club concert—it could not be.

But she must do something. She was just debating whether or not to accept a position at Hobart, Minnesota, when Prexie called her into his office. She came out with shining, ecstatic eyes, dove into the crowd of Senior girls who were standing near the library steps, threw her arms around Bess and Della and swayed them rapturously back and forth.

"Oh, girls! I'm not going away, I'm not going away!" she chanted.

Prexie had asked her to stay and teach Latin in the Academy. Her salary would be small—smaller than at Hobart—but she would be serving the college. She would be *here*, she could stay at Adams! Wasn't it wonderful! The girls exclaimed, envied her. Next year they would all be gone, and lucky Hester would be here still.

She had had the most wonderful talk with Prexie. He had shown her all his charm, all his sympathy, when she had told him of her vague but ardent aspirations, of how she wanted to do something "real." He had made her see how much she would be helping by taking this work in the Academy. The old Academy was running down, and he wanted her young enthusiasm to put new life into it. Of course she would

want "enough money for hair ribbons," he told her playfully. The college could not afford to pay much for the Academy work. But she would have the honor of serving it. He wanted someone who lived in Adamsville, who understood the school. He did not mention the fact that the position did not pay enough for anyone who had board to pay. He assured her that even if she did feel young and inexperienced it would be the spirit of her work that counted.

Commencement came—her own Commencement. Hester had no part in the class play. Ellen was to give the Mantle Oration. But Hester must have something. She was chosen to give the Ivy Oration when the class ivy was planted with vain hopes of growth beside the chapel wall. Her name figured prominently in the class history and the prophecy.

"And Hester, having married our other loyal citizen of Adamsville, Humphrey Dilley, remained to welcome back the class of '03 with her own sunny smile to old Adams."

Her smile was a little set and strained when she was called forward to receive her class gift from Gertie on the campus, in the less serious part of the Class Day exercises, when local hits were given. A photograph of trees—"a souvenir of the Forest," Gertie said. She thought that that was a little cruel of Gertie.

Her own Commencement Day exercises, in the hot, gloomy cavern of the church. It seemed only half real when she went through the long, familiar ceremony. "The candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts may rise." Then the roll of the well-known names—"Robert Burns Alden" . . . until Prexie came to "Hester Grace Harris." She crossed the platform, made her dipping bow.

When the exercises were over, the graduating class lingered outside the church. The boys took off their black gowns and the stiff mortarboards from their perspiring foreheads. Big Bill was there with his mother and father,

who had come from Winner "to see him graduate." The father a huge, gaunt, bent, old countryman, the mother a tiny scared, prim, bright-eyed woman in neat, old-fashioned clothes. Big Bill had asked Hester and her mother to go with him and his parents to the Glee Club singing on the campus. There was something very conscious and solemn about Bill that night, so that Hester tried nervously to stay near the older people. Yet she could not help admiring Bill's simple, genuine manner with his old-fashioned parents, his big-boy affection for his mother.

She was with Bill at the Senior Picnic the next day, out at Adams Grove. They were on the social committee together. They buttered dozens of buns and roasted beefsteak over a blazing fire. She had never liked Bill so well as that day. In his shirt sleeves, his great arms glistening with heat, his hair rumpled, his huge mouth grinning. He set her up on the bough of a tree and helped her to climb fences and to ford the creek. It was hot in the woods under the oak trees, where bushes of wild gooseberries and the leaves of May apples grew among the long grass. Hester was exhausted when the committee was through with its work. She and Bill went off to the bank of the creek and sat there to rest.

They talked about what they meant to do in the future. Bill said it was all right for Hester to stay, but she wasn't to wear herself out teaching Preps. He was going to teach and save money to study law some day. He'd been offered a job teaching and coaching athletics, but he hadn't made up his mind yet whether to take it. It depended on something else. He might decide to go out West and try his luck out there.

He rolled over, found a pebble, took aim elaborately and made it "skip" the creek. She knew that something was coming, from the rigid, conscious line of his big shoulders, the husky note in his voice when he spoke.

"Hester, I'd be mighty glad if you'd tell me just how much there is between you and Joe."

She said, a little tremulously, "What makes you think there's anything?"

"Meaning there isn't? Well, I'd kinda figures that out, I'm glad. I always liked Joe myself, and I could kinda understand his orneriness. He had a lot more to him than folks gave him credit for, if he ever does anything with it. Joe kinda started in wrong—I don't know. But he's a good guy. I don't think he'd ever make you happy, though, Hester. He looks at things too different."

Hester was silent.

Bill said: "I guess you know what I've always thought of you, Hester. I don't see how you could help it the way I've more or less camped on your trail. I guess you've always thought I was pretty much of a roughneck."

"I don't think you're a roughneck, Bill. I think you're an old peach. Everyone thinks so."

"Sure, I'm a Winner!" he laughed huskily. "But then I don't blame you if you did think I was a gawk. I guess I was about the crudest thing that ever struck Adams. Bad enough now—but I feel a lot different about things, even if I don't show it. This school has sure meant a lot to me. You have too, Hester, a lot more than you know. You were the only girl that was decent to me when I blew in at that first Freshman party on Mrs. Lewis' lawn. You were so darn nice to everybody. You've always seemed like—well, the i-deal Adams girl to me."

She tried to murmur something deprecatingly. She wished nervously that he wouldn't go on. There was something pitiful to her about his great, awkward body, his big hands and feet, his big mouth and his deep-set, mournful eyes.

He tried to grin at her. "Well—if you could stand it to take me in hand, Hester, I might turn out the pride of the college yet."

Hester slowly shook her head. Her eyes filled with tears. She wanted anxiously to soften her refusal, to tell Bill how much she did like him, almost to give in, after all. But the others broke

in on them. "Hey, you two! Come out of that. You're wanted." They had to pretend as much as they could that nothing had happened, and go back to the rest. Just before they left, Bill managed to whisper to her:

"Sure you won't change your mind? . . . Well, that's all right, I don't pretend I'm good enough for you, Hester."

Tears filled her eyes again.

They all rode back in a bumping hay rick. Bill was solemn and gloomy, would not be roused to retort by any jest. Glances were exchanged among the others. Hester did not sit beside him when they drove out of the woods, but in the back of the hay rick with the other girls. They dangled their feet over the soft, cloudy dust of the road as they bumped back to town between the trees and the fields in the late afternoon.

Hester went to the two evening trains to see them all leave. At the familiar station, with the long, covered brick platform and the row of box elder trees bordering the vacant lot, they talked about their next Commencement.

"Oh, people, you *must* all of you come back!" Hester cried.

Big Bill had not appeared at the station. He had jumped off the hay rick before they got into town and disappeared. Hester was remorseful at the memory of the tragic look on his big, gloomy face, with the heavy eyebrows and the deep-set eyes and the two long front locks of parted hair. He would go back to Winner later on the freight. She tried nervously not to let anyone speak of his disappearance, not to hear when the boys said "What'd you do to Bill, Hester?"

There were all the good-byes, hurried at the last. "Take care of the school, Hester. Don't let it run away. Be good to the Preps. We expect you to be waiting here for us next spring."

The last train went. The plume of pale gray smoke melted into the paler sky. The station had that too familiar summer emptiness—more than that. They could hear the humming rails and the evening sound of insects from the

vacant lot. There was only Humphrey Dilley left. He and Hester walked solemnly down College Street together. They made plans for the return of the kitchenware they had rented from the china store for the Senior picnic. Hester did not care if Humphrey did see the tears that kept coming weakly into her eyes.

He stood awkwardly on the porch of the Harris house, not knowing how to leave, as always.

"Well," he said finally, "guess we'll be here, anyway, next year."

CHAPTER VII

HESTER was tired out during the summer, so that at times her mother declared anxiously that she was "not fit to teach" next year. Hester would not listen to that. But she was apathetic for a while. Something vital was gone. She let her mother take her to old Dr. Burns, who said gruffly that she'd been doing a hundred or so too many things, like all these college girls, and that she must "keep outside all she could, forget about these other things." He tried to get her interested in the study of botany afield, but after spending one morning in the pasture north of town with Russell's old botany handbook, she gave that up. She drank a tablespoonful of olive oil after every meal and lounged through the hot weather.

For a time it seemed to her that everything was over. But there was "next year" still to look forward to. She would still be a part of things, she would not lose interest just because she had her diploma. Humphrey escorted her from some of the Christian Endeavor meetings again, and they talked over plans for the first '03 reunion. She talked over prospective members with E. B. B. girls who lived in town, and did a little discreet rushing of flattered high school girls who would soon enter college.

When fall came she was fully alive again, and, although her mother still complained over her thinness, she impatiently refused to keep on with the

olive oil or to "take things easily this year." She was not going to lose all her spirit just because she was out of school now, as so many people did. It seemed strange and lonely at first not to have her own classmates back. It seemed that she must come upon them in the old familiar haunts—the library reading room, the cinder paths. But there were so many things to do. And the Harris House was full of girls again.

Much of her old Senior glory still hung about her. She was given a Freshman man for the Opening Reception. She was welcomed at E. B. B. meetings and helped with rushing. She was asked to lead an early meeting of the Y. W. C. A. She had a few dates with Senior boys. She was "not going to lost interest in a single thing." She still felt herself as more or less a member of the student body. "Prep" teachers were not really considered among the faculty. She felt that she loved Adams more deeply than ever this year.

She went with the consecration of an acolyte to her work among the "Preps." She tried to put her old enthusiasm into her class work in the Academy. She was not going to belie Prexie's trust in her. She would "build up the Academy," she would "give it all that she had." It might be hard at first, but she would not let herself be discouraged.

"Prep" classes met on the third floor of Recitation Hall—"the roof garden" it was facetiously called. There were three flights of steep battered stairs, with little square landings, to climb. The dingy, high-ceilinged rooms were cut up into strange shapes and sizes. They were so cold that Hester wore her coat in her classroom all winter. The old radiators banged and pounded. Little hailstorms of plaster fell suddenly from the ceilings.

In former days, when high schools were few, the Academy had flourished. It had been lively and overflowing, with its own literary and debating societies, its own singing society and baseball team, which had occasionally beat

the college team. Now only a dwindling number of raw-boned boys and dowdy girls came from the little nearby "burgs," such as Winner, where full high school courses were not offered. The Preps were like the Volunteer Band, in general a sorry lot, except for a few faculty children whose parents felt that the college expected them to patronize the Academy. "Prep" was a joke now to the college. Its few little activities were swallowed up by the glory of college affairs. About the most that could be mustered were a Prep picnic in the spring, and an annual German play which none but the members of the class attended.

The Latin classes were the largest, but also the least hopeful. They were filled with bored, superior and disgruntled college youths who were "making up credits" in Cæsar or Cicero. They meant simply to get their credits, no more. Hester's enthusiasm flung itself day after day against this stony row of youths sitting slumped down upon the ends of their spines in the ancient chairs that had been relegated to the roof garden. She would not believe that they could not be aroused, that she "might as well give them their credits and let them get out." She worked and worried over her teaching that year. She meant to "put spirit into Prep." She wanted to "make Latin interesting." She was conscientious about grammar and constructions, however, as she had been when she had "got her Latin" with Joe.

She meant to do all kinds of things for her Preps, although, of course, she couldn't start everything this first year.

She still felt that she was a part of things. Of course she no longer held offices or made speeches at mass meetings. But there was a new pleasure in being turned to for advice by the E. B. B. and the Y. W. girls. She promised the Junior girls to "help think up things for the *Pioneer*." She helped them to steal snapshots from the other girl's rooms. Humphrey Dilley took her to the Glee Club concert. Of course it wasn't very exciting going with Hum-

phrey; but she would not have liked to stay at home when all the girls were going.

All year she could look forward to the first class reunion. Hester had been chosen secretary at their last class meeting, as at their very first. That meant she heard from every one. She sent out the class letter. She wrote the '03 items for the Alumni Bulletin. She was the one to start the circle letter which her old "bunch of girls" had agreed to keep going as long as they should live—Bess, Ellen, Della, Margaret, Crazie Gertie. To think of seeing them all back at Commencement, of hearing about their teaching experiences, of their plans for the next year!

She wanted '03 to "get up a grand stunt" for their first Alumni Day to show that their spirit was still alive. There was no one but Humphrey with whom to talk it over. Humphrey could always be depended upon to help, but he wasn't the one to be looked to for ideas.

Under her anxiety for the reunion was a secret, unadmitted thought of Big Bill. Sometimes when she was crossing the campus from the roof garden in the chilly late afternoon she would suddenly realize that Big Bill was gone, that he wouldn't come, huge and grinning, from around the corner of Recitation Hall to walk home with her. She wondered how Bill would seem to her at Commencement time this year. Where was he?—he hadn't sent in his class letter.

So that she felt a strange twinge of disappointment when she met them all at the station and heard that Big Bill would not be back. He was teaching, the boys said, in a Colorado mining town—having a pretty hard time of it, too. They looked at Hester.

Of course it was glorious. The girls were full of teaching tales. Della was engaged to her superintendent. Ellen wore a diamond, and she and Bunty were constantly together. Ellen was to stay at home the next year. She had "broken down" and had to leave her teaching. Her pretty, vivacious face

had a languid, spiritless look. She didn't seem to take her old interest in things. Bess was going with her family to California and was going to take her master's degree at Berkeley. They all united in begging Hester to tell them everything that had happened at Adams this year. She was their link with the old school. They told her that she must never leave, so that they would always feel that '03 had a place there.

They had the "grand talks" for which she had been hungering. Some of the girls said that the Adams ideals meant more to them now than ever before, now that they saw how the world was. But they despaired of ever putting them to practice in their teaching. All but Hester. But Hester, they declared, had always understood them better than anyone else. Hester would keep her enthusiasm.

Hester murmured, contrite:

"Oh, girls! And I feel that I haven't accomplished a thing with my Prep people this year."

She felt that she hadn't tried hard enough. She was ashamed that she had ever had that feeling of looking down on Prep—instead of trying to lift Prep up.

Well, she would see them all again next year—oh, they *must* come, they must have '03 better represented again than any class on Alumni Day.

She was not given a name for the Opening Reception the next fall. But at the last moment one of the Junior girls in the house could not go, and Hester took her place. She felt very motherly toward the Freshman boy whom she took under her protection—a very engaging, eager little fellow with blue eyes and a funny grin. He called on her several times and she "advised him about his college course." Then he suddenly sprang to eminence in the Freshman class and became the possessor of a popular Freshman girl. Goodness, she hadn't been expecting to go with a Freshman at this late day! But she missed the boys whom she had known.

She couldn't help feeling just a little

more out of college things this year. They didn't ask her to lead a Y. W. until the year was half over and they ran out of leaders. There was no one but Humphrey again to take her to the Glee Club concert.

She turned to her Preps. She tried to make them realize that they, too, were a part of Adams. She wanted them to have more of a place in the college life. She urged them to go to mass meetings and to the Billings game.

There were fewer at the reunion this year. The second reunion was not so important. Their five-year reunion was what they must be planning for now. Think of having been five years out of college! Two seemed bad enough. Still she heard nothing from Big Bill.

Her third year she felt that she was no longer a real part of the college undergraduate life. The Seniors had been Freshmen in her day. The others had known her only as a teacher in the Academy. She felt that she hardly knew the girls at E. B. B. now. She was asked to lead the Y. W. only as a last resort when someone failed. No one thought of assigning her a Freshman man for the Opening Reception.

This was the first year that she had not had a man for the Glee Club concert. Humphrey, who was in his father's bank now, had gone out of town. But would he have kept on asking her, anyway? To stay at home on the night of the Glee Club concert! She said gayly to the girls in the house: "Oh, no, I'm not going this year. I think it's time for me to quit."

She was very helpful in pressing clothes, opening the door, telling whether petticoats showed, as she had done before she entered college. She kept smiling when the girls went off, bright-eyed, carrying their flowers. She exclaimed over the flowers, helped the girls to clip the stems and put them in water the next day. She went into their rooms after the concert to have them tell her all about it. As she sat smiling and eagerly listening, her mind was repeating and clinging to those maxims: "It is more important to learn

how to take a defeat than a victory"; "It isn't whether you win or lose, it's the spirit with which you do it." There was a consolation in the effort to take this with the Adams spirit.

There was another consolation, that showed that perhaps all these little defeats had a purpose. They made her turn to her Preps with renewed enthusiasm. She tried to reorganize the old literary society, to make it as important as the college societies. She entertained the Prep teachers at a little tea—the English, History and Commercial teacher, of the Susie Dykes type, the Principal and his wife, a little elderly woman who taught everything that was left over. She tried to discover latent genius among the Preps. She declared to the girls in the circle letter that the Preps were wonderful when you came to know them. She was young, alive, "sweet-looking." Awkward Prep girls declared that they adored Miss Harris, that she had the most wonderful smile. Her old smile, that was a little defensive now when she went to E. B. B., could beam out warm, encouraging for her Preps. Even if she couldn't do much with her Latin classes, she might rouse the Preps to take part in activities. And that was where spirit was developed. She urged them to get up parties, and she acted as chaperon. She said to the other teachers: "We mustn't let Prep run down." The bashful adoration of the girls who waited to walk home with her from the roof garden consoled her for the growing tendency of the girls in the Harris House to look on her as simply the landlady's daughter, almost a member of the faculty. They did not invite her to spreads very often.

The next year she still kept her ambition for Prep. She tried heroically to keep the literary society running. She could not hope quite so much from her Latin classes. She hinted that she might not stay, but no one would hear of that. Prexie praised her, convinced her that she was doing something after all. Of course her salary was small. But she wasn't working for money. She was working to "serve the college."

She was the only one who was really trying to do something for Prep.

Every spring brought the five-year reunion just that much nearer.

She had at last given up thinking of herself as still one of the student body. She suddenly found a new interest among the "Scrub Faculty." They were inclined to look down on the Prep teachers, who had only A. B. degrees. Hester was not with them at the Faculty Boarding Club, where the college students who acted as waiters reported gay times. But a little new instructor in the English Department showed a sudden interest in Hester, whom he met at a faculty tea. He insisted that she be included in the Scrub picnics and parties. She was starved for pleasures, and wrote the girls that "the Scrubs were a wonderful crowd, more fun than she had ever dreamed."

You couldn't help having a good time with Mr. Willius, although no one could really take him seriously. Hunter Hollingsford Willius. He had come from the East somewhere. He was a strange, vivacious, irrepressible little man, very light, very pale, with an exaggerated Harvard accent. He flew about, the women of the faculty said, as if he were being pulled by wires. Nothing could "phase" him. He proudly exhibited the new *Pioneer* in which he had received more "roasts" than any member of the faculty—even than old reliable "Strong-pipe" Jones who cut the grass on the campus and smoked the only pipe seen in those precincts. "Little Willie" was the campus joke.

Hester said that sometimes she felt rather "funny" going with Willie to things. But it meant nothing. He was all kinds of fun on a picnic. There wasn't a thing the man couldn't cook. He rented two rooms in the old Beasley house, where he sometimes gave dinners cooked and served entirely by himself. He had a flattering, caressing, restless, irrepressible manner. Faculty men professed to despise him. He was attentive to nearly every woman on the faculty, married or single, for at least one day. But Hester, surprisingly—

for the new French instructor, Miss Wylie, with be-curved hair and much jewelry, ogled him shamelessly—was his favorite. He called her "Merry Sunshine" in public, and in private—under his breath sometimes when they went to the spring for water at picnics—"Little Buttercup." Of course he was foolish, but you could have fun with Willie.

The astonishing thing was that he should be a good teacher under his flippancy. He did far more modern reading than any member of the faculty. He gave good advice on themes. But he "didn't fit in at Adams." The students did not have the right respect for him. He smoked cigarettes incessantly. All Eastern men did that, though, Miss Wylie said. He was a "light-weight." Imagine his leading the chapel exercises! No one was surprised that he was not asked to come back the next year. After he had gone it was learned that he had been engaged to some girl in the East all the time—and think how he had run around with the women on the faculty!

It was silly to really miss Willie. But now the Scrub Faculty good times languished.

The fifth reunion. Over half the class was back—a wonderful showing. There were changes now. Some were married, many were engaged. They were getting into different work than the first inevitable teaching.

Jay Oehrle made the great sensation of the class. He was only one year out of the theological seminary to which he had gone, presumably with the help of the girl in his home town—for the boys asserted that Jay "didn't have a red." He had taken an assistant pastorate in a large church. And after three months there he had married, not the girl from his home town, but a wealthy spinster nineteen years older than Jay himself, who was a member of his congregation. She was working strenuously for his clerical advancement. Jay had brought her to the Commencement exercises, at all of which she stared with an elaborate gra-

ciousness through the first lorgnette seen in Adamsville, except in a Dramatic Club play. She had a strange, admonishing and yet ingratiating manner toward Jay, whom she considered as a youthful genius of humble origin whom she had discovered and whose career she would "make." Jay was more dark and savagely earnest than ever, but he had developed an impressive mysterious silence and an entirely new manner. Adeline—"Gosh! Sweet Adeline!" Rob Alden said, rolling his eyes and leaning faintly against a tree—was much concerned for the "delicacy" of Jay's throat. It had never recovered from his efforts as yell-leader, although its huskiness still had a queer impressiveness of its own. She was always appearing at his side with a silken scarf whenever he strayed from her. Well, they had always known that Jay would "do something," would "get ahead somehow"—but who in his wildest dreams could have pictured this!

Rob Alden was much more himself, although just the least bit bald. Bunty had not come. Ellen was still at home, still trying to gather enough strength to marry him. The girls said that they were afraid she never would.

No one had heard from Big Bill. He seemed to have dropped out of sight. Only his old roommate said that Bill was still in the West and that he had gone through some pretty hard times. He believed that Bill had to support his old parents. But they needn't worry, old Bill would come through, he "had the stuff in him."

Some of the girls were better dressed than they had been in school. They were earning their own money now. Hester still dressed in the old girlish Adams way, still fastened her light, straight hair with amber combs, wore shirtwaists such as she had worn in her college days. She "looked just the same," they all said.

CHAPTER VIII

HESTER admitted that she got discouraged sometimes. In spite of all

that she could do, the Academy was dwindling year by year. There was less and less interest in it. The brief enthusiasm that she had managed to instil for activities, and for parties, was gone. She thought of leaving, of getting away. But she hated to add one more burden to those that "Prexie Jim" already had. There was a faction now among the trustees and the faculty who wanted to get Prexie Jim out. He was not doing enough for the advancement and broadening out of the college. There was a party working for President Heller of little Southern Iowa College, a man of determination and vision, of less personal charm than Prexie Jim, but with more of a business head. Prexie Jim could get money, but he could not use it to advantage. His were all the small personal methods that did not suit the present growth of the institution. It would be hard for Prexie Jim to find someone to take her place. She would stay as long as he needed her. He had never wanted to give up the old Academy in which he had once taught years ago.

Yet it seemed as if she were doing so little. She thought about social service work again, about applying for a place in the college in Asia Minor. John and Helen Fellows came back to Adams that year, partly to make a plea for more funds for the college. John made "a wonderful talk" in chapel, everyone said. But he was smaller than Hester had remembered him as being, and with something thin, hard and strained about him. He could no longer think, talk or dream of anything but his work. The life of that little precarious missionary college overshadowed the life of everything else in the world. Helen was spoken of as "his devoted wife and most valued helper." At first Helen seemed curiously unchanged. She still had a look of belated girlishness, her hair was combed as it had always been, her way of talking was as eager as ever. It was just that the old charm had mysteriously evaporated from her person and her manner. The old soft, sunny look was gone. That fly-away

fluffy hair was somehow dead-looking now. As Hester talked to Helen her desire to "take part in the work," that she had been feeling, ended in a kind of ache of obscure disappointment. Yet she wanted to "do something."

Leonard Stoner and Susie Dykes had married and gone as assistants to the college in Asia Minor. John Fellows spoke of them impressively in chapel as the stand-bys of the school.

Yet, when she really thought of it, how could she leave Adams? Not to be apart of it any more, not to enter into its life and help to keep even a small and seemingly unimportant part of it going? Not to see her classmates when they came back, not to be here to hold her class together. . . . How could she ever live apart from these things? Where could any place be found as wonderful, and as nearly perfect?

When Prexie Jim finally was forced to resign, when President Heller was appointed in his place, when there was nothing to keep her from going if she really wished—she knew that she did not want to go. She clung to her place in the Academy with increasing loyalty and fear. To have to leave Adams would be like being sent into a cold and unknown waste. She could never love anything again as she had loved the college.

There was her mother. Poor little Mrs. Harris was very frail. They had had to give up the Harris House and take the two rooms that "Little Willie" had once had—small, low, gloomy rooms, with the addition of a kind of overgrown closet for a kitchen. These were some of the only light-housekeeping rooms for rent in Adamsville. They took what was not too battered of the old Harris House furniture, with the pieces and the treasures that had grown to have special meanings to them. The house and the girls had "got to be too much for mamma." The old Harris House was more of a wreck than ever now. For a year or two they managed to rent it to a club of boys. After the girls' and boys' quadrangles were built,

they sold the lot to the Dean of Men and the house was torn down.

Their friends said, with tactful intent:

"I'm so glad you and your mother are so cosy up there in your little rooms, and haven't that big house to look after. It must have been quite a burden. I always wondered how your mother could do it, she looked so frail."

Hester said, "Oh, yes, indeed, it's so much better for mamma."

But she missed the house and the girls—the house as it used to be—the old shabby rooms where so many eventful things had happened in the lives of herself and of other Adams girls. To think of boys living in the Harris House! She hated to go past that corner, past the big birch tree. Its glory had finally passed from it, and the Harris House was no longer a factor in college affairs.

People wondered: "Do Hester and her mother both live on that little salary? Perhaps Russell sends them something."

"Russell! Not if that wife of his is what everyone says she is. It will take more than Russell Harris can ever make to support her."

Mrs. Harris had a tiny bit of independent income. Hester paid most of their living expenses out of her little salary. It was hard for them to dress as they were expected to do, to contribute to this and that. But people worked for the college for its own sake, and not for the sake of money. They felt the shame of mentioning the money side. The college paid in other things than in money.

Now that the Academy was in actual danger, Hester felt how dear it had become to her, how much she had hoped from her work there. And perhaps she hadn't failed. Her students, few as they were, still liked her. They said, "Oh, Miss Harris, don't you leave or Prep won't be anything!"

She still went to college functions. Now she went to the Opening Reception with Miss Howell, the other Academy teacher besides the little elderly

one, and with Miss Keats, who worked in the registrar's office. She went to basket-ball games with them, and with some of "the older town girls." The teas, the games, the receptions, meant much to her, as her other pleasures and activities dwindled. There was what Miss Keats called "a snippy crowd" among the Scrub Faculty now. They scorned to have anything to do with the supernumeraries around the college, from the Academy and the President's office.

Humphrey Dilley, of course, was still in Adamsville. Hester saw him only when they were planning something for '03. He still kept his old loyalty. He was now vice-president of the Adamsville State Bank—his father had died—and one of the important bachelors in the town, a stand-by in the college and the Congregational church. He would be a trustee in both organizations when he was a little older.

The ten-year reunion made a happy break. Hester had been writing letters all year urging people to come back. With her old spirit, she worked to have a splendid, big reunion. She boosted for '03. "Boosting" was almost as important a word now as "serving." She rejoiced ecstatically over every letter announcing that another member of the class planned to come. She would see people that she hadn't seen since her own Commencement!

Fewer and fewer of her classmates wrote to her now—none of the men. Sometimes it would be months before the circle letter reached her. She wondered if this time she would see Bill—what he would be like. She thought of him with a little excitement. She thought back, with a kind of gratitude, to his old devotion.

She declared that she was absolutely praying for good weather. She would weep if it dared to rain Alumni Day. They were planning the grandest stunt!

She felt a grateful return of the old sense of importance and value in the class in writing all the letters and knowing just who planned to come.

Not Jay this time. His Adeline had won for him a parish in the East. Rob had seen Jay on a recent trip. He reported that Jay wore a clerical coat and his collar "wrong side before, kind of like one of these Catholic priests," although he still seemed to be a Congregational minister. There were rumors of trouble between him and his Adeline, although she was as ambitious for him as ever.

Bunty would not come. Nor Ellen. Poor Ellen had never regained her health, had never married Bunty, and only a little while after the fifth reunion she had died in California.

But Rob was there, of course, stocky, rosy, really bald this time. Rob seemed to keep track of everyone. He had seen Bill, too. The old fellow had begun to make really good now, out there in the West. Bill was going to be a big man out there some day. And you ought to have seen him, Rob said. Actually, old Bill was a fine-looking man now. He had grown up to those hands and feet of his. He still had his old jokes, but Bill had changed, he had got a lot more dignity, too. There was a rumor—Rob didn't know how true it was, couldn't get much out of the old fellow—that Bill was going to be married to some girl out there. Rob himself had married an '07 Adams girl.

Hester wanted eagerly to show them all the new buildings, the improvements on the campus. The new chapel, the science hall. They declared that she was the most familiar thing at Adams, that she was just as she had always been, that she had the same old Hester smile.

She was still slender, girlish. She dressed as she had always done, in the simple, fresh, not too fashionable way that Adams girls had affected in her day. She wore the amber combs still. But the old soft look had left her face. Her small features were a little sharpened. She had no color. Her smile had in it a bright, strained sweetness, not exactly forced, but over-eager. Thin, fine, curved lines were etched

sharply about the corners of her mouth.

They said that Hester was as enthusiastic as ever. She kept the old spirit. She had held close to her ideals—more than the rest of them had been able to do. But then she had stayed right at Adams.

She cried, "Oh, people, do you think so? I've—honestly, I have—got so discouraged sometimes."

"Oh, Hester, I've never seen you discouraged."

Some of them said afterward: "What makes Hester stick there in the Academy? I should think she'd want to get out."

The next year did see the end of the old Academy. It could no longer compete with the High Schools. The time for it was gone.

Hester had long been expecting this. The Academy had been doomed when Prexie Jim had asked her to stay. And yet it was like tearing something out of her life, she felt, to have it go.

And what would happen now? Would she have to leave Adams?

She felt that she could not go into public school work. It lacked the prestige, the atmosphere, of anything connected with a college. But if she did go she would have to take her mother with her, and then what else was there for her to do?

Carrie Lake, '00, had been asked to come back to the college this year as Dean of Women. Miss Keats said angrily to Hester, "Why couldn't they have given you a decent job like that? It's just that you've been here so long that they don't really know how to appreciate you. It's always the folks around here that do the most that get the least credit for it." Hester would not have said such things. But sometimes she did enjoy having Miss Keats say them for her. Martha Keats was red-haired, with a kind of roughness and a tendency to sputtering that had at first offended Hester. But she had found that Martha was "really more loyal than those that said less." She had developed a kind of angry protect-

ing affection for Hester, whom she believed that the college had used and not rewarded. Martha Keats herself was not a graduate, except for a short course in commercial work at the Academy. But she always admitted, too, after a spasm of sputtering, that she supposed she had got too much attached to the place to leave it, like all the rest of them. She supposed that she would go right on putting up with everything.

There were only a few things about which Hester did wish to complain. She still accepted with fervor. And these were such little personal things, she said, compared to the institution itself. Think of all it gave them! Think of the wonderful chapel talks, and the beautiful Vesper services in the new chapel. The institution was so much greater than themselves. All that they could do for it would be little enough.

She did not leave. President Heller—"Prexie" now—had a new place for her. The big million-dollar endowment campaign was beginning now. Many extra helpers would be needed at Adams and it was desirable to have those who need be paid as little as possible. Hester was to work in the President's office. In the feeling that she was really doing something for Adams, she did not feel so keenly the closing of the Academy, the turning of the old roof garden into office rooms. For those three years she lived for the endowment campaign. She hunted up statistics, kept records. Think what success would mean to the school! The new dormitories could be built, there would be a new organ in the chapel, a new men's gymnasium. This was something to which she could "give everything" again.

She became now one of the staunchest devotees of Prexie Heller. Oh, of course she worshiped him from afar. He was not like Prexie Jim, who called her "Hester" and held her hand warmly while he spoke to her. Prexie Heller was grand, sublime, distant, Miltonic. She transferred to him the devotion that had once been given to Daisy Lyons and Helen Garvis. She felt that

she was in the presence of a great man.

"Well, I wish I could believe in things the way you do," Miss Keats told her. "But I'm such an old grouch I can't help seeing the other side of things. You're the least selfish person I ever saw."

There was the glorious night when the college bell was rung and all the whistles were blown, when men threw silver dollars upon the platform of the chapel to make up the last five hundred dollars of the endowment fund. The speeches and the yells, the singing of the new Adams song that a Junior boy had written:

*"Spirit of Adams,
We give to thee
Our hearts, our faith,
Our loyalty."*

She went home exalted, uplifted. What did any personal life matter beside the immortal spirit of Adams? What did it matter if she was cramped next year, if she had promised every cent that she could wring from her little salary for the next five years, in answer to very definite solicitations? It was all for Adams. It was so little—if she could only have done more!

CHAPTER IX

IMMEDIATELY after the endowment campaign was concluded, another was begun. Only half the things could now be done that were included in Prexie's great vision of Adams. Adams could not stand still. A few "pessimists," "croakers," declared that the change was all on the outside, that new buildings couldn't make up for the loss of the old free life. But that wasn't the spirit which got things done. The campus, certain aspects of the college life, were transformed. Everything in Adams had gone forward except the salaries of its professors. Hester was still contributing to succeeding endowments from her princely wage.

She stayed on. She would probably have a permanent place in the Presi-

dent's office. She was getting to be one of the fixtures in the college. Of course she would stay, Miss Keats said grimly. People couldn't be picked from bushes that would do all that Hester was doing for sixty-five dollars a month. That was her salary, a chastely guarded secret which only Miss Keats certainly knew. Miss Keats knew all the salaries. She "could have told some things," she sometimes remarked. When she saw old Strong-pipe driving leisurely over the campus with his grass-cutting machine, she would remark with grim pleasure, "You'll never get the salary that he's getting, my girl! Oh, well, what's a simple A.B. compared with a degree in Smokeology!"

Martha Keats still did all the grumbling for both of them. Hester could never bring herself to more than a wistful "Well, I do think that I ought to be getting more than I am getting. But then I know how in need of money the college is." Her affections, her whole life, were too closely entwined with the thought of the college for her to really complain. She kept up the idea that it was better to work for little or nothing at Adams than for millions elsewhere. The college could give something that mere money could not give.

Hester would never criticize Prexie Heller, whom she associated with the college in her devotion. She defended him hotly when she heard people say that "it was personal ambition on Prexie's part." If they had seen Prexie as she had seen him! He lived for the college. He hadn't a thought, he hadn't a desire outside of it. He had more than taken the place of Prexie Jim in her worship. But it wasn't a personal feeling, she always told Miss Keats. Prexie was too aloof and awe-inspiring and grand. When she saw him in his doctor's gown slashed with orange and his mortarboard with the silken tassel, a splendid figure, the embodiment of all for which Adams stood, she felt that she was worshiping an ideal, not a person. But these people—Martha Keats was one—who said that Prexie

was too grand to be human, were wrong. She had seen Prexie almost discouraged, almost heartbroken at moments over the terrible disappointments and difficulties of the campaigns. She cherished these instances of his precious humanity in her secret heart, and they made him infinitely more beloved.

Because of her loyalty to Prexie she would not admit that the spirit of the campus life was changing. Oh, in accidentals, of course, but Adams could never change in fundamentals. Of course there were things that seemed strange. The dormitory life couldn't help spoiling some of the old free companionship between men and girls, such as there had been when they ate together at hilarious boarding clubs. There was all this new formality and "red tape" at Adams. It was a shock at first to have dances upon the Adams campus.

But then the privilege of belonging to such a splendid institution! The pride of feeling that it was unique. A little, beautiful world of its own, sheltered, keeping to its own standards, not heterogeneous and miscellaneous like the great universities.

If she had ever felt that some of the old "spirit of service" was dying out, during war times it flamed gloriously to life again. She thought of what Prexie said: "The spirit of Adams is the spirit of democracy, of service for humanity, and the spirit of democracy and service is the spirit of America."

At first, Adams could not believe in the war. It had seemed like the defeat of the Adams ideals. The whole spirit of Adams was "against conflict." Great things were hoped from the peace ship. The professors sent a petition to the President.

But when the United States became involved, it was seen that Adams had stood for peace when peace was possible, but not for the dread name of pacifism. Now the professors who had signed the petition scrambled for positions with relief commissions, with the Y. M. C. A. It had been whispered for a time that Prexie had made "pacifistic utterances." Strange rumors filled the

campus. But these were stopped when Prexie was given a post of importance in the Government service. Adams rose valiantly and proved its spirit when the day of testing came.

Not Carlson, "the most brilliant man on the campus," to whose chair Josiah Porterfield had given an extra endowment to keep him at Adams, was chosen as Acting President during Prexie's absence. Instead, Dr. Seeley, from the science department, a good, safe, solid, not too brainy man. Dr. Seeley had always seemed a pleasant, quiet, serious man. Now strange things came to light. The submerged jealousies and resentments of years ran rampant. Now had come the happy day, long despaired of by Dr. Seeley and his colleagues, when Carlson could no longer have things all his own way, when it was proved that brains were not all that made a man, when this talk of "originality" was shown for what it was, when evidences of disturbing intelligence were revealed in all their danger. Now was the day when the old guard came into its own, and heresy received its just punishment.

They were "after Carlson," in faculty meeting, where he was questioned by a band made strong by unity. It was a serious matter, of course—he had a wife and family—but his strongly cut lips twitched a little as he saw the childish joy which these men took in their new ferocity, like little boys playing Indian. This was better even than dressing up in plumes and swords and parading with the Knights Templar if it wasn't at the same time a display so infinitely sad. Documents were circulated to be signed, there were investigations by trustees. To be able to strike at Carlson, almost in the open, and with motives of glorious and exalted patriotism!

But they did not "get Carlson." "Carlson can run circles around those old boys, he's a wise guy," the students said. But their thirst was slightly appeased by running down a few other instances of "dangerous opinions."

The little old lady who had taught in

the Academy and was now teaching a few extra classes and assisting the Dean of Women. She would not sign one of the documents, declaring with tears that "Christ had said to turn the other cheek, to love one's enemies, to do unto others as ye would have others do unto ye." She wavered a little when the now favorite text of chapel and pulpit was brought forward—"I come not to bring peace but to bring a sword." But that was only one instance, and Christ was called "the Prince of Peace." People regretted it—but an example like that, however harmless it might seem, could not be passed by. There was a young German instructor with a tubercular wife. He must go. Fraülein Hoeffner, who taught violin, a large and buxom person suspected to be fond of beer in the privacy of her room but forgiven for the past six years because of her efforts with the Girls' Glee Club, left in a storm. People shuddered when it was discovered what a viper they had been cherishing unsuspected in their midst.

Hester saw none of this. There were regrettable things—but life was great and exalted. Adams was glorious. There was a new, fascinating severity and suggestion of danger in the sight of boys in uniform on the Adams campus. The terrible sorrow, that both thrilled and hurt her, was that these beautiful boys might go away to be killed. Hester, as always, believed fervently.

And there was an exciting stirring-up and change in the Adams life. So many professors were gone. She was set to teaching Freshman Latin classes. She helped with the Red Cross. No one knew what might happen.

Yet how quickly things settled down into sameness again. The old interests came back. The breath from the great world which returning professors were to bring back with them was only a breath. Dr. Seeley stepped back into the chemistry department. Carlson, after showing that he could remain if he wished, accepted a position with a large university. Hester was put back

into the President's office, where she now had the noble work of keeping war records.

Her youth was now definitely gone. She was a fixture on the campus—"Hetty G." the students called her. They laughed at her little enthusiasms, at her ardent middle-aged manner, at her sidecombs and the coat that she wore year after year. In the Annual, she had taken an insignificant place among the other worthies who were subjects for "roasts"—that band of whom Strongpipe Jones was head. They wondered if she took off her smile at night.

She still religiously attended college functions with Miss Keats and Miss Crowley and Miss Summerson. She went to the Opening Reception in the evening dress that she had worn for eight years. Cream-colored, trimmed with wide lace, semi-low-necked, with a skirt that was lengthened or shortened according to mode, but never quite enough of either. She belonged to a decorous town club. She assisted at teas held by connections of the Adams family, her mother now being too frail. To Miss Keats and Miss Crowley she had a faint traditional family glory. One thing that hurt her dreadfully was the discovery that she and some of the other Adamsville "girls" were no longer welcome at E. B. B. But they still loved their little old plain gold pins better than these expensive pearl-encrusted ones that the girls were now wearing. At least she had never lost her loyalty. She would still do anything for E. B. B. She still rejoiced, unselfishly and without personal resentment, when popular new girls joined E. B. B. But her smile was defensive when she met the girls at teas.

She was still excited over the results of the Billings game. Those in the President's office had early intelligence of the Phi Beta Kappa appointments. They were sometimes asked to be judges at oratorical contests. They held hot discussions as to who best deserved the medal that was now being given for "The most distinguished service to

Adams during the four years." They knew minutely the achievements of all the prominent undergraduates, they had favorites over whom they "simply raved"—"Oh, I think she's the loveliest girl! She has the most wonderful voice that was ever heard at Adams."

She must take her pride in the growth and advancement of the college.

The town, too, was so changed, although she did feel that in spite of her pride in it she could mourn over its lost aspects a little. It had long been paved. It had more asphalt than any other town of its size in Iowa. The character of the houses was changing. Those that had been built in the early nineteen hundreds—large frame houses with big, plain porches rounded at the corners—now looked elderly. There were new bungalows and stucco houses with hot, red splashes of geraniums at the windows. The character of the stores was different, with the little new ready-to-wear shops. The old Vienna Café had long passed away; giving place first to "Wick's," with its one long, dusky room with oaken compartments and yellow-shaded lights, where chocolate pie à la modes were consumed; and now to tea rooms and an "inn."

Hester's personal life, beyond the religion of the college, was fed by her worship of Prexie and her loyalty to her class. She was still the Alumni Secretary of '03. She wrote letters indefatigably, gathered the class news for the *Alumni Bulletin*. She felt that the old, precious class spirit was in her keeping. It was, in a way, a principle with her to wear her hair as she had done in the old days, to be in every way "the same Hester." Miss Keats, who had had "no chance for such things," liked to have Hester tell of the girls and boys of her own class, the "stunts they had pulled off," the flowers she had had for the Glee Club concerts. Miss Keats knew all about Big Bill. She was going to look for him at that twentieth reunion, to "see what he looked like."

Humphrey, of course, was still in Adamsville. He was as loyal and dependable as ever. These qualities now quite overshadowed his slowness. Her meetings and talks with Humphrey made her think of the old happy importance of committee meetings. Humphrey had married, a few years before, a woman whom he had met at Lake Okoboji. She was a social leader, "not just the Adams type." But his old class was still nearer to Humphrey's heart than any later acquisition. He was a trustee and a solid citizen now, still chosen as treasurer of organizations. Heavy, with creases in his chin, a grayish skin, and hair that he still tried to keep in its own massive wave. He too was a fixture.

Hester and her mother lived in their three small rooms. Hester did practically all of the housework and the cooking now. Little Mrs. Harris was nearly blind. The brightest time of the year for her, as well as for Hester, was Commencement, when some of "her dear girls" who had stayed in the Harris House came to see her and talk to her, holding her frail, wrinkled little hands tenderly in theirs. She could remember the girls, but she could no longer remember their classes: '95 and 1915—they were all the same to her.

Hester was living now for her twenty-year reunion.

CHAPTER X

THAT Commencement feeling in the town. The long cement walks burning through light shoe soles, but over the walks and over the asphalt a dappling of grayish elm shadows. Girls and boys going endlessly up and down. Cars purring over the asphalt, parked at the south of the campus, hot light flashing off the smooth black hoods and steel radiator caps. Downtown eating-houses crowded and warm—the dining-room of the old Adams House, the Wild Rose Tea Room and Pickwick Inn. Warm, moist green June grass on the wide lawns of the big frame houses; and along the cinder drives

lilac bushes that gave the scent and feeling to the days.

Little touches: Professor Hendries' dog, Collie Prince, strolling in through the open, sunlit doorway of the chapel. A doctor's gown thrown over the big lilac bush on the lawn of the little old-fashioned house, with sharp white gables, where old "Pa" Taylor—long retired—lived. Humphrey Dilley meeting speakers and prominent graduates with his Cadillac.

Now Commencement was half over. Baccalaureate and Class Days—sunny, perfect days. Showers, but brief, sparkling, summery showers that sent people scurrying over the campus with hastily folded chairs, and left the green June grass and the lilacs fresher and richer scented.

Then Alumni Day. Old grads thick on the campus. '96 wore little purple and gold hats. Girls and boys wandering down the cinder paths watched these antics with tolerant, superior, amused and careless eyes.

A little group of idle girls came down College Street, their arms about each other. Hester passed them.

"Good-morning, girls."

"Good-morning," they chorused.

Their eyes followed the figure hurrying past them.

"Where's Hetty G. going in such a hurry?"

"I suppose she has to arrange everything for Commencement. Didn't you know Commencement couldn't be pulled off in this institution without Hetty G.?"

"She's going to her reunion, girls."

"What reunion—for heaven's sake!"

"Didn't you know Hetty was graduated in naughty-three?"

"Didn't know Hetty had ever been graduated! Thought she'd always been here, like Recitation Hall—"

"Like Bunny's straw hat."

One of them called softly.

"Hurry, Hetty old dear! She's running to 'get things started,' girls. There's Humphrey—girls! Don't they make a darling, frisky little couple?"

They giggled with light, uncon-

scious cruelty, and loitered on the sunlight through the elm trees dappling their shining heads and smooth, entwined arms and pretty frocks with shadows.

Hester hurried on, with an eager, wistful look on her face. Now that she had passed the girls she was not smiling, but the imprint of the smile remained in the fine set lines about her mouth.

She thought she had never seen the campus so beautiful. The green grass and the dusky evergreens; the flowering bushes along the black cinder paths; the little, delicate, silver-stemmed birches. Oh, lovely, lovely. . . .

She was almost late for her class meeting on the lawn of the Quad. She had had to help with the diplomas, post notices, order the little parasols for the class stunt. She hadn't seen half of those dear people. Bill Warren was coming from Seattle, Leonard and Susie Stoner. She had just heard this morning that Jinny Woodward—*Jinny*—would be here! They were all to carry little scarlet and white parasols. And the horns, what about the horns?

Humphrey Dilley caught up with her.

"Oh, Humphrey, you *do* have the horns!"

Good old Humphrey. He performed a stately little foot dance on the cinder path trying to get in step with her hurrying feet.

"Oh, isn't it all beautiful!"

Her glance took in the ivied buildings, the leafy trees, the grassy, open spaces, as they went on together down the paths that were so much more than familiar to both of them. They saw the shade-dappled lawn of the Quad, sloping to the path, a little group of people. . . .

She began to smile and to hurry. She left Humphrey several steps behind as she climbed the grassy slope, waving excitedly and calling, "Hello, you aught-threes!"

"Why, it's Hester!" . . . "Hester Harris!" . . . "Well, well, well—welcome to our circle!" "Hester and

Humphrey—isn't that exactly like old times!"

She was in the midst of the happiness for which she lived—being greeted, and kissed, welcomed and welcoming . . . with misty eyes . . . catching sight of one face after another, with little gasps of remembrance. . . .

"Bill! Of course I know you." Bill—think of it! She felt a little consciousness. "Rob! Margaret, my dear, I'm so *glad* to see you!" Poor darling Margaret, she was so changed, so terribly changed. "Gertie Bumstead! Yes, I do." But there was nothing except the familiar brown glint of eyes in that large, massaged face to identify the old Crazy Gert.

"Do you know who this is?"

A low, beautiful voice, a fleeting touch on her arm, a dark face with soft contours and dark, starry eyes—one strange dash of silver in dusky hair—

"Jinny Woodward!"

They embraced. The contact with Jinny was thrilling—with her soft, fragrant arms and breast, the touch of her exquisite garments. But Hester drew back from it somehow shaken with a disquieted sense that changed into excited admiration as she took in the loveliness of this half-strange, half-familiar Jinny—her manner of laughing ease, her indefinable splendor. There was time only for a breathless glimpse—

"People, here are your parasols. *Please* like them, because Humphrey and I have scoured the country for them."

She laughed excitedly while Humphrey, with his solemn air, unwrapped the absurd toy parasols with their scarlet ruffles and rosettes—

"Oh, boy!" Big Bill shouted. "Will my mamma let me out?"

He seized one in his enormous hand and went mincing down the lawn, simpering and bowing to the laughing Quadrangle girls who passed. Bill *was* still the same—although he had seemed at first so different, with his long locks shorn and the new, easy, well-fitting clothes, the new manner. "Same old

Bill," the laughing, pleased glances said. But Bill was the leader at once.

"Hester, are we actually to carry these things? Goodness, I feel so foolish!" Della was half shocked. "If my Sophomore son should see me—"

"Oh, but let him see you! Show him you're a good aught-three!" Hester cried. "They've never balked at anything."

"Right! And never will. Every man shoulder his parasol—forward, march!"

Big Bill led them off, stalking at the head, carrying the little absurdity in martial style, they all following after, some embarrassed and laughing, Della protesting, all of them conscious and hilarious, carrying it off gayly before the laughing eyes of undergraduates. Hester went along happily, not seeing the glances and the nudges of the students who passed her—"Look at Hetty G.! Isn't she having the time of her young life?" Hester moved up and down the line, distributing the little knots of scarlet and white ribbon that she had sat up to make the night before.

"Still on the job, Hester!"

"Still on the job."

She saw in a kind of dazzle of light the sunlit campus, the big group of people under the birches, the colors, streamers, badges, the old gymnasium standing red and solid in the sunshine.

'03 had a lovely level spot in the shade of the tallest birch. "How splendid—Hester, I know we owe this to you." People clapped them as they sat down. The smiling faces were all irradiated. The class of 1903—Hester's heart swelled with proud appreciation. She looked about—she saw the classes each in its own place. The two dear old white-haired members of '79; '96 with their absurd hats; last year's graduating class back in full force, radiantly excited; her own class, the dear old bunch, '03.

She thought of those who weren't here. Of Ellen. Bunty had married—"My dear, a regular flapper type, I nearly fell over when he introduced

us!" Had they heard about Jay? He had run off with another woman in his congregation—or something—anyway, he had got into a terrible mess and Adeline was suing him for divorce, he had lost his church—it was all in the papers.

Horns were being tooted and trumpets blown, class yells were being fervently given, boys and girls were darting about with paper plates soggy with yellow potato salad. Big Bill led their own yell—

Osky-wow-wow!

Skinny-wow-wow!

'03!

Wow! Wow!

Hester yelled so enthusiastically that the tears stood in her eyes.

Hester must help with the picnic luncheon. She was in and out of the gymnasium, urging the girls to make more sandwiches, sending the boys on hurried errands, running about. "Hetty G.'s all excited—what would the Pioneer College of the Prairies do without her?"

She did not hear that.

"People, what can I get you?"

Her thin, delicate face was flushed and glistening with heat, her light hair escaped from the amber combs in fine damp strands.

"Aren't you dead, Hester?"

"Oh, no," she gasped happily.

She looked up with shining gratitude when Big Bill took her gently but firmly by the shoulders and forced her down upon the thick green grass. He fanned her with a paper plate with exaggerated fervor. She had thought that there might be some discomfort in meeting him, that he might hold resentment. She glanced up—saw in his face only a kind of special gentleness, something a little pitiful, as she had seen in Jinny's face. She smiled her brave determined smile.

The luncheon was over. The grass was littered over with bits of paper, ribbons, scraps—work for Strongpipe. Martha Keats would be delighted with that. It was hot. People stirred and

whispered through the last of the speeches. But there was the class meeting to look forward to. In that, again, she had a place.

"Well, people," Humphrey began ponderously, "I suppose it's time we were adjourning for a little business meeting."

Della moaned that it was too hot for business.

"Humphrey!" Hester cried eagerly. "That little clump of evergreens behind the gym! It's always cooler there."

"I remember no such place in my day of campus perambulations," Bill asserted.

"Oh, well, there's lots you don't remember!" . . . Heavens! She hoped he didn't think she was referring to *that*!

When they all sat down, with groans of pleasure, on the brown needle-matted ground under the evergreens close to the cool stone wall, they were suddenly silent. Humphrey sat down facing them, clearing his throat in his old deliberate way. Hester could see from the eyes, some looking intently, brightly at him, some turned consciously, with pretended carelessness, away, that they were realizing Humphrey—his dependability through twenty years. Twenty years . . . the sunlight, cooled and darkened by the evergreens, fell upon them, voices sounded remotely from the campus, the June air touched their faces poignantly.

Humphrey was beginning, with that look of dumb agony that always came into his eyes when he tried to make a speech:

"Fellow classmates . . . of the class of nineteen-aught-three . . . I feel as if on this occasion . . . something ought to be said. As I believe you know, I am not a speaker. But our friend Bill Warren always did like to talk—" A gust of appreciative laughter, "so I've asked him to say a few words to you. Bill. . . ."

The eyes turned toward Bill, sitting hunched over tailor-fashion, poking at the pine needles with a little stick—they took in his big, pleasant, ungainly

figure, that was impressive in some strange new way, the smile curving his wide mouth, the air of exuberance that made them say he was still the same Bill. He looked up slowly, they felt the gray glow of his deep-set, mournful eyes. Then he began to speak in an easy, deep-toned, direct way:

"Well, fellow classmates, naughty-three's more naughty than ever—after the base insinuations cast upon me by our talkative friend Humphrey, that I—I—a grave man, a silent man—"

The same Bill—no, not the same, more changed than any of them. She had heard them say, "how wonderfully Bill had developed," that "Bill had come into his own." She felt with a strange pain that it was true. Hester sat listening to the deep tones. In a kind of fear she realized how long and how intensely she had been looking forward to this—now it was happening. She forced herself, smiling, to follow Bill's words:

"Well, classmates, I hate to stop talking, but I see you're all sitting on edge to get in a word—especially our friend Humphrey, here. Well, that's a little of what I wanted to say."

"The secretary will read the minutes of the last evening."

Everything seemed breathlessly still. Her fingers trembled a little as she opened the familiar red-and-black book, holding down the leaves that flapped in the soft June wind. Her voice went thinly through the words that were like food to her—"The class of 1903 met June nine, nineteen twenty-two, and was called to order by the president—"

"If there is no correction to these minutes they stand approved."

"Mr. President!"

"Mr. Warren."

Big Bill leaped to his feet. "Not a correction exactly, but I would like to make a motion—resolution—whisper to me, Gertie, what do you call it?—resolution, *she* says, to be incorporated, by force if necessary, in the record of to-day's meeting. Fellow classmates, there's one member of this band of the faithful who's more faithful than all

the rest, who's been largely instrumental in making this day a tumultuous success. Boys and girls, I move we give three rousing cheers for Hester."

They gave them. "Speech! Speech!"

Hester's heart seemed to pound and stop. Her smile quavered tremulously on her lips. This was her tribute. Her work, her loyalty had been worth while. For the first time in years her heart had again its own food.

There were other speeches.

"I move we hear from Leonard and Susie Stoner, brethren and sistern."

Leonard Stoner, just as he had always been, little, with a wave of lightish hair and an Adam's apple, not much more dried up than he had always been, talked somewhat pompously of the work of himself and his wife in Asia Minor, speaking patronizingly of "the corner in their hearts that they would always keep for dear Almas Mater." He would have been glad to have spoken more. Susie Dykes Stoner—big, plain, homely, with the same black hair and protruding teeth—had now an air of mature authority before which Hester felt uncertain. She had brought up, besides the Asia Minorites, a family of young Stoners, all of whom would receive their training at Adams. The Stoners were full of their great work "establishing the ideals of Adams College among the downtrodden peoples of Asia Minor." John Fellows had had a nervous breakdown, and the Stoners were now in power. They were listened to with respect. They had gone far afield; they had seen "conditions."

Jinny laughingly refused to speak. She declared that she was too black a sheep. Hester learned that she was here because her husband, James Broderick, the geologist, had been asked to speak before the Scientific Society. Jinny had "go out," as she used to darkly threaten. The music of her voice thrilled and disquieted Hester with its suggestion of experience, of some unknown richness and plenitude of life. Her dusky, cloudy hair with that one sharp dazzle of silver, her brows piquantly uneven, the shadowy, deeply dented corners of her mouth,

her light, exquisite gown . . . Jinny had defied everything that Hester counted best. But she was more wonderful than ever.

It was so soon over. They seemed to have held the meeting and then dismissed it—an event in their lives, but only one event among others. They were sitting about talking of other things. The Stoners of Asia Minor to whoever would listen. Humphrey seemed a little out of it. Embarrassment came over Hester. They knew each other and the place so well. It meant so much to them. They were both at the disadvantage of caring more than the others. It was like a guilty secret between them.

Her warm sense of gratitude toward Bill left her. He was taking it all so easily. He had given her her tribute—and now it was over. She had met all the slow closing-in, the insidious disappointment of her life, with the same smile. Now it seemed carved upon her mouth, as if she could not move her lips out of their set painful, valiant line.

She felt a faint deep resentment. It was she who had kept the faith. But those most listened to—Big Bill, Jinny, even the Stoners—were those who had not been the "real Adams people." Her heart began to feel chill and wonderingly depressed.

Prexie's reception was a welter of light dresses, black coats, frappe and afternoon shadows. She was useful again—running off on her aching feet to find chairs for tired ladies, going in search of people for other people. There was even a martyred exaltation in having no time to see her own "dear people." A crowd surrounded Jinny. They had no chance to talk together, although Jinny pulled Hester gently to her side and held her there, conspicuously. She had one sharp, amazed vision of Big Bill's wife. She was young, a radiant and assured person, gowned and made up with delicate exquisiteness. Not like his "i-deal Adams girl."

Hester got away just in time to go down to the seventeen train. The little, dingy brick station with the arcade, the trunks, the boys and girls in laugh-

ing groups, the late-afternoon sunshine. Her own group she found near the door of the baggage room laughing at a tale told jointly by Bill and his wife. They waved—"Here's Hester! Bless her heart; I knew she'd get here." She hurried up to them on tired, aching feet, valiantly eager, helpful and smiling.

Humphrey came out of the depot room. "Ten minutes late."

"Then you'll be here that much longer!"

"Isn't Hester wonderful! She never loses her enthusiasm."

Big Bill was looking at her thoughtfully. She strove to say, with wistful appeal, "*Has the day gone off well, people?*"

"Perfect!"

They were leaving again—and she was watching them go. There were so many things unsaid. Jinny left her husband and stood near Hester, taking Hester's hand in her own, warm and vital through the light silk glove. Jinny seemed trying to convey a kind of comfort.

"How is dear Mrs. Harris? I wish I might have seen her."

"Well," Hester answered brightly. "Frail, of course, and she doesn't see well."

"And you're not in the old Harris House!"

"Oh, no, that's gone. But we're very cozy in our little rooms, just mamma and I."

The talk included them again.

Rob was saying, "Coming back next year, folkses?"

"Of course they are," Hester cried.

They shook their heads doubtfully. "No, I imagine it will be a little harder to get back every year from now on."

The little group of people, the station, the well-known row of box elder

trees seemed to recede and waver. She could not hold them.

With the sound of the whistle they were eager to be off. The women gave Hester hasty, preoccupied embraces. She made no effort this time to press forward, but let the surging crowd of careless young people have their way. She stood back until the train was gone.

The rails still shook. A thin plume of smoke drifted across the pale clear June sky. The dray man—a new one—said, "Well, I'll be glad to be rid of the last of them darn trunks." Hester looked back and saw Humphrey close behind her; and with inner reluctance, with that sense of a guilty secret, they walked sedately down College Street together.

"Well—it's over again."

"Yes," she said bravely, "but we'll see them again. Now there's our thirty-year reunion to look forward to."

CHAPTER XI

HUMPHREY had left her. Her steps sounded loud on the wide cement walk. The tall elms stood up thick-leaved, motionless, as they would stand all through the long hot summer, throwing gray dappled shadows on the asphalt. There was that after-Commencement feeling—a growing languor, a sadness and a uselessness in the fragrance that floated out over the thick, moist, solid mid-June heat.

She hated to go back up to those three small rooms. But suddenly she wanted to see Martha Keats. She had never really admitted Martha. But all at once she wanted to talk to her, to feel her blunt, affectionate, admiring interest, to explain to her, for instance, how she had felt about Joe Forrest and Bill Warren and to feel the consolation of her loyalty.



From an Editor's Uneasy Chair

By Charles B. Driscoll

I

WERE it not for the nuts and cranks who come into my office, I would die of ennui. There is a woman who wants to build a canal from Omaha to Seattle, a man who has invented a train that runs on armatures instead of wheels, a sad-eyed fellow who says he can tell what you are thinking about by the location of the gray hairs on your head, and a preposterous bore who has committed to memory the works of Tom Paine and wants to repeat them to me. I like these visitors. None of them belongs to the Kiwanis club or collects for an alumni fund.

II

THE woman who looks her best in décolleté never is popular among women. They view her with the same suspicion and jealousy with which a merchant views a rival merchant who has better wares and knows better how to display them.

III

I KNOW a worthless millionaire who idled about for three years, waiting for a blooded bull calf, the property of a friend of his, to grow to maturity. He arranged to have his friend fatten the bull on the choicest feeds, just when the pedigreed animal was becoming useful. Then he bought the bull for a fabulous price, and had it killed and

dressed for his table, though he could have bought a fat steer for a fraction of the price, and would have had much better meat from him. Whenever I see Frank Munsey buy a fine old newspaper and butcher it I am reminded of my worthless and wealthy friend.

IV

THE average American newspaper is written by illiterate boys and girls and edited by older men who never have read anything except newspapers. This accounts for the great success attained by the average American newspaper publisher.

V

THIS country, having tried diluted democracy for 147 years, is ready for a monarchist movement. But the few who are competent to lead such a movement shrink from the rotogravure publicity that would hound them and their families if they should succeed.

VI

THE most pitiful spectacle in America, and the most humiliating, is that of a harmless, white-haired old man, reduced to the necessity of harvesting wheat and hugging babies, in addition to making vapid speeches, in order to get himself reelected to the presidency of the country that has cornered the world's gold supply.



The Smile

By Halle Schaffner

THE Nice English Girl thought that she had never seen anyone more fantastic than the young person, who sat almost across from her at one of the small tables in the dining-room of the Grand Hotel. Strange people had a way of floating in and out of Venice, but none such as she! Earlier in the day, when she first saw her, the Nice English Girl felt obliged to question the concierge.

"Who is she?" drawing him aside, but coming from her, nothing ever seemed inquisitive or out of the way.

"A new arrival—Siberian," he replied, with a funny lift of his eyebrows, which made her feel somehow that she shouldn't have put the remark to him at all. And usually he was all confidences and full of chatty little remarks about the fellow guests,—as if it were a privilege to let her in on harmless gossip. Now his manner seemed to convey a certain surprise that anyone so very correct and sweet as the Nice English Girl should want to know the identity of the Siberian.

None the less, as she sat there,—waiting for her brother who had been at the Lido and was late,—she almost permitted herself to stare at the singular, definite little being across from her. Something casual and cool and remote in her manner told her that the Siberian was used to stares. What did one glance more or less matter to her? An odd defiance lived in the pale face, framed in a white felt hat, of extraordinary size, tilted to show the black, blue-black hair with its pomegranate flower, almost as red as the curved, lightly cruel lips. She never smiled; it wasn't that kind of a face.

And so, just to amuse herself, the Nice English Girl fell to wondering what sort of things would make her smile—and what she would look like if ever those wide topaz eyes, with the longest curling black lashes that fringed upward, despite the cosmetics,—as though they had been pasted on to form a jetty nimbus,—were to lose for an instant that hardness which gave a glaze, almost of hate, or burnt-out despair, to that amber glass gaze.

A white face, intense, shaped like a fox—that was it, she had it now, the Nice English Girl decided, with a little flare of inward triumph! Everything about it ran true to type, the subtle accent of the high cheek bones, the delicate thin nose, with its nostrils almost quivering on the scent of something, even the set of the defiant chin. A savage, queer little face, that had gnawed its way beyond reaches of ice and cold, bitter suns. Made of snow . . . something so frozen about it, she decided. It was fun pretending . . . a new fox-hunt.

The little Siberian ordered her dinner, then settled the folds of the heavily embroidered white shawl more closely, to hide the edges of a shabby wool jacket. From her wrist dangled a dozen bracelets set with bright colored jewels. One bangle was gone; sold that day, and there would be another missing in a day or two, because one must eat and live as well as possible, where one had the best chance. But the Nice English Girl could not know that; she would have been too shocked; besides, she was busy pretending, just to relieve the monotony of her thoughts.

So they waited for their dinner orders while each wondered what the

other thought. It was warm, and both were bored. The Nice English Girl was watching for her brother; the little Siberian, for the luck that never came. Odd, after a season when she had been able to live quite easily, to buy a few clothes, even to send a little money to those who had fled with her, to Constantinople. They lingered there, but she had gone on. What chance there for her? She had a pretty, supple body, she still had youth, if she had nothing else. Work—she had never learned. From where she came that was left to peasants, and servants. What else were they for? But not any more! She gave a little shiver as she thought of the horror that lay behind her. Once, terribly once, she had been that Nice English Girl. Secure; safe. To be able always to lift one's head, naturally, to the sun—without defiance, as English daisies raised theirs to the light. Her chin cupped in her hands, she shrugged her shoulders. After all, what did it matter? To live until one chose to die. . . . Just because her first day in Venice was unlucky, who could tell what the next day would bring? Perhaps tomorrow someone would appear, an American or best of all, an Englishman! They were less agitating, nor were they in such haste—not that they gave you more—but they never forgot to thank you.

A group of women tourists panted into the dining-room—a dusty, dowdy file. Three or four of them bulged out of brown or grey silk dresses, creased and mussed, like greasy paper bags full of facts. Also several thin, speckled young girls—all pushing toward their table, as they pushed toward art, beauty, and scenery, day after day. What lives,—even worse! The Nice English Girl caught the glance of the little Siberian. And involuntarily each smiled across at the other—warm and friendly, such smiles as two women give when

they can't help smiling together at other women.

How human it makes her look, thought the Nice English Girl, the little glow from the warmth of that smile still lingering around her proper, sheltered heart.

"Not like a fox at all! I wish I could talk to her," she added to herself.

At that moment the Nice English Girl's brother came in to the room and sat beside her. After he had made his excuses for being late and had been forgiven, and after he had given his order, they began to chat. In his leisurely, privileged voice he asked.

"What's new? Anyone come?"

"Only a girl, a Siberian, at the table opposite, but you can't see her from your place. Rather a type. I asked the concierge about her, and he didn't say. She looks past one so strangely. But she appears to have a sense of humor. Only a moment ago, some terrible women came by, and we smiled at each other," she chattered on. . . .

When he could, the man turned in his chair and gave a glance, a long glance, at the little Siberian. He turned again, to his sister.

"Not the kind for you, my dear. Hardly the sort of person for you to smile at," he said, slightly annoyed, and amused at her lack of sophistication.

Soon the little Siberian, without appearing to notice them, got up from the table, and drawing her shawl around her pliant body, closely above the wool jacket, left the dining-room, with her deliberate, slow walk. What luck and so soon, she said to herself. Those amiable English! But even as she congratulated herself on the sudden turn in her fortunes, she knew that she could never smile again—not even in her heart—at that Nice English Girl. . . .

Late that night, as she expected, he sent his card up to her.



Répétition Générale

By George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken

§ 1

Civilization.—The gradual spread of the suspicion that the United States is not a truly civilized country (despite its production of such things as Christian Science, silent sanitary appliances, the seedless orange, jazz, Prohibition and the Wilson idealism) has caused many poor suckers to rack their brains trying to frame a sound definition of civilization. A great waste of energy. The thing may be got at very simply. A civilized place is any one to which a Beethoven, a Goethe or a Michelangelo, imagining him to be born into the world today, would be tempted to move, and in which he would be treated with respect, enabled to make a living, and permitted to live according to his taste.

§ 2

Observations in London.—1. There are more valets in London than there are trousers.

2. The virtue of every Englishman is that he is able to convince one that he is a gentleman even in such cases as he isn't.

3. London gets the better-grade American traveler. Paris gets the rest.

4. The Englishman makes virtues of those things that the American is pleased to regard as vices.

5. The Englishman is well-mannered; the Frenchman, polite.

6. The Englishman assumes that the American is his equal. The latter soon convinces him, however, that the American is his inferior.

7. England is a democracy in perfectly fitting evening clothes.

8. London is one of the few great capitals of Europe that is still free from the influence of American bounders.

9. Rural England is so still and quiet and peaceful that it always seems to the stranger as if the folk of the country were off fighting some great war.

10. English flowers are as formal as Englishmen themselves. There is nothing nonchalant, nothing free and easy about them, as with the flowers of other countries. They are stiff, erect, immobile. They are England.

11. London is the bachelor capital of the world. It combines the hard philosophy of Berlin with the gentle charm of Paris.

12. No man has seen London who hasn't seen its dawn.

§ 3

Common Sense.—Common sense is for the bourgeoisie. Nonsense is the privilege of the aristocracy. The worries of the world are for the common people. Meanwhile the elect may amuse and divert itself with gipsy philosophies and wheezeful metaphysics. Only the cultivated, the well-to-do and the secure are safe and free to indulge themselves in holidays from acumen.

§ 4

Dry Slaves.—The news that organized labor in the United States has split, or is about to split, upon the question of Prohibition will certainly give no surprise to attentive students of American unionism. The honest working man always hates some other honest working man a great deal more than he

hates any conceivable capitalist, just as every Irishman hates some other Irishman more than he hates any Englishman. It is precisely this internecine enmity which keeps the whole labor movement in the Republic weak and ineffective, and gives capital its present colossal strength. I doubt that there is a union in America that has not, at some time or other, ratted upon some other union. At the time of the Steel strike the whole Federation of Labor performed that knightly act, led by the incomparable Gompers. During the war, when all the patriotic working men of the country, union and non-union, engaged in a unanimous effort to loot the public treasury, most of the great national unions went it alone. The plasterers, for example, grabbed all they could get, without the slightest regard for the fate of, say, the machinists, the cigarmakers or the pretzel-varnishers. The result was that the men of some of the crafts got a great deal more than their fair share of the swag, and that the men of others got very little, if anything. It was a stimulating spectacle, and very refreshing to the patriotic capitalists of the land, who countered to the neck by raising prices to the level of the purchasing power of the most fortunate unionists. Those who got less of the loot thus fell victims to the high cost of living, and many of them were reduced to poverty. One hears today so much about the high wages received by bricklayers, roofers, tile-setters and other such brigands in New York that the fact tends to be overlooked that the great majority of other working men, especially outside New York, are actually getting lower wages, in purchasing power, than they got in 1913. Throughout the United States the relative number of dwelling-houses owned by worker occupants is smaller than it was in 1913, and the average mortgage upon those still owned is greater. The honest artisan, in truth, was magnificently swindled by the war. The money that poured into his hands turned out to be chiefly imaginary. The genuine profits of the war were all

reaped by capital. Even the farmers, who appeared to have got away with a great deal of loot, have been relieved of it during the past few years, and are now poorer than they have ever been since 1893.

According to the *New Republic*, which is usually accurate in such matters, the chief unions standing against the anti-Prohibition campaign of Gompers and company are the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Trainmen and the Order of Railroad Conductors—all very powerful unions, and all, it will be noticed, made up of railroad men. Why should railroad men be on the side of the bluenoses, and seek to deprive their fellow slaves of beer? For the plain reason that they are forced to do without it themselves by the nature of their occupation. A locomotive engineer who took a growler with him into his cab would be an obvious danger to navigation, and so he has to confine his drinking to water from his tender. He thus hates every man who is not so afflicted, including especially every union man, and will give all the aid he can to Puritans who seek to oppress other union men with Prohibition. That the general interests of unionism are against such malignant paternalism is nothing to him. He is too stupid to care anything about unionism in general. All he thinks about is himself, and in this case his thoughts about himself are bitter, and fill him with a hatred of his fellows. It is for exactly the same reason that the majority of farmers are Prohibitionists. All the decenter and more inviting drinks would be beyond their reach, even if Prohibition were abandoned, and so they are hotly in favor of making it impossible, or, at all events, unlawful, for anyone else to drink them.

As I have often argued in this place, a blind hatred of men who are having a better time in the world is at the bottom of all moral legislation, as it is at the bottom of all democracy. The so-called Mann Act is a shining example. The aim of this astounding law, of

course, is not to put down adultery; it is simply to put down that variety of adultery which is most romantic and charming. What got it upon the books was the constant gabble in the newspapers about wealthy men taking their stenographers to Atlantic City on week-end excursions. Such idle tales, read beside the kitchen-stove by men condemned to monogamous misery with frowsy, unclean and ill-natured wives, naturally aroused in them a vast detestation of the errant week-enders, and this detestation eventually rolled up enough force to attract the attention of the scoundrels who make laws at Washington. The result was the Mann Act. Since then a number of the states have passed Mann Acts of their own, usually forbidding the use of automobiles "for immoral purposes." But there is nowhere a law forbidding yokels to drag virgins into infamy on foot. What remains within the talents and opportunities of the great masses of morons is still quite lawful, though it involves at bottom the same violation of God's holy ordinance that is forbidden by the Mann Act.

Here we come to the limits of moral legislation. On the one hand, it never invades the field of acts that are possible to any moron; on the other hand, it never prohibits acts that are quite beyond his imagination. What lies between is the thing that is *verboten*. In many of the Middle Western states there are statutes forbidding the smoking of cigarettes, for cigarette-smoking, to the yokels of that region, is regarded as a citified and Babylonish act, and if they attempted it themselves they would be derided by their fellows and perhaps divorced by their wives, just as they would be derided and divorced if they bathed every day, or bought dress clothes, or attempted to play the piano. But smoking a corn-cob pipe, whether in public or in private, is nowhere forbidden, for the plain reason that every yokel can do it. It not only lies within his means; it also lies within his tastes, and hence within his *mores*. The same consideration gets into comstockery. The

yokels who support this madness seldom if ever denounce the dirtiness of the newspapers, for the matter printed in newspapers lies within their comprehension, and hence within their sphere of enjoyment. But they are hot against the far less gross naughtiness of so-called "classical" books, for these books they simply cannot read, and so they want to put the law upon everyone who can.

At the other end there are the acts that a yokel cannot imagine at all, or, more accurately, that he cannot imagine enjoying. For example, listening to good music. To spend four hours at a performance of "Tristan und Isolde" is to him utterly incomprehensible; he therefore cannot envy the man who has the means, time and patience for it. If he could, we should have laws censoring opera as we now have laws censoring literature, and practically every opera worth hearing would be prohibited. It is for this reason that I have always argued eloquently against all schemes to extend musical culture to the masses. The sole result of that enterprise, if it were a success, would be to make all of the best music unlawful. The yokels, however diligently tutored, would never get beyond a taste for such garbage as Tosti's "Goodbye" and Rubinstein's "Melody in F," but along with it they would acquire a suspicion that lovelier realms lay beyond, and so they would begin to envy the persons able to enter those realms, and to work up a yearning to punish them for their superiority. The education of the boobery, indeed, is a very dangerous business. It is in the states where every adolescent yokel goes to high-school that civilization is most in danger.

§ 5

The Monthly Award.—The elegant $3\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{3}{4}$ custard pie, bestowed monthly by *Répétition Générale* upon the most toothsome whimwhamer of the period in question, has this month, because of the especial magnitude of the achievement of the winner, been increased to a pie measuring $3\frac{9}{16}$ by $4\frac{7}{8}$ and is

awarded to the National Kraut Packers Association of Clyde, Ohio, for the following advertisement recently published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, and headed "Everywhere People Are Talking About Sauerkraut":

Men in Pullman smoking compartments, in offices, in clubs, in homes; women in stores, in hotels, in fashionable tea rooms—wherever people meet and talk, they are telling others the facts about sauerkraut.

For people like to spread good news. And the truths which Science has found out about sauerkraut are wonderfully interesting.

For centuries sauerkraut has been a favorite food with millions. And in those countries where it is largely eaten its beneficial effects have been known to many.

Now all are hearing these remarkable facts about the value of sauerkraut as an intestinal cleanser and disinfectant, as a natural regulator and conditioner. And everywhere there is a new interest in it.

§ 6

Church Note.—On a recent hot summer Sunday afternoon I wandered into St. Thomas's Church in Fifth Avenue and, bareheaded and silent, drank in in solitude the cool, aloof, majestic beauty of its interior. The rev. clergyman was away, doubtless on vacation. Of the pew-holders, not one was present—all, too, were doubtless at the shore, in the mountains, or in Europe. Even the sexton was not to be seen. All was unmarred, serene, beautiful, holy. At that moment I came nearer to believing in God than at any other time in my life.

§ 7

The Champion.—When the Hon. Charles Evans Hughes was sworn into office as Secretary of State, the fact was generally looked upon as a concession to the higher cerebral centers—as a bone thrown by Dr. Harding to the *intelligentsia*. His private taste, obviously, was for men less austere intellectually—hard-boiled bankers, oratorical labor leaders, prominent Elks, "business" lawyers, etc. But in appointing Hughes he yielded to the higher learning, and incidentally cast an onion at Wilson, who had manned the State Department with

such palpable selling-platers as Bryan and Lansing. Well, what has Hughes done to date to justify his selection as representative of the literate and illuminated minority? He has (a) been swindled by the British every time he has tackled them, (b) reduced the American cases against Russia and Mexico to the last stages of absurdity, and (c) convinced two-thirds of the peoples of Europe and all of those of Latin-America, finally and forever, that Uncle Sam is both a rogue and a jack-ass. In all that time, he has not devised a single scheme of statecraft that would work, or said or written a single sentence that was above the modest talents of an editorial writer for the *New York Tribune*.

§ 8

The Exiles.—One encounters them in all the corners of Europe, men forlorn of hope, the lines of sorrow upon their faces, the marks of grief and disappointment in their hearts. There is an ache, a longing, in them, and their voices are no longer gay. They are far from home, in happier lands that yet are alien and so are, to them, sad. One I found at Skindle's in Maidenhead, England, a fine fellow whose heart beat bitterly under his striped silk shirt. Another I encountered in a little inn in Vlissingen on the Holland coast, with tears in his fine Celtic blue eyes. Still another, erst a jolly soul, was grumbling in the Rue de Rivoli in Paris, and another still in a large café in Dresden. I found them, these melancholy and transplanted exiles, in Milan, in Budapest, in Lucerne, in Brussels, in far-off Athens, working, but heavy-hearted and morose and wounded behind their forced smiles.

They are the last remains of the great and noble White Company, soldiers and gentlemen all, the bartenders of the good old days in America.

§ 9

Notice.—Four years ago, in this place,

a prize of \$100,000 cash was offered to any reader who would rise up in meeting, lay his hand upon his heart, kiss the Good Book, and swear solemnly that he believed that any of the dollar-a-year men of the war would be jailed for their stealings and forced to disgorge. No claimant for the money having appeared, the offer is herewith withdrawn.

§ 10

Vox Populi, Vox Dei, III.—The voice of the Lord God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, as reflected by the legal voice of the people of the United States, severally and collectively:

46. God is opposed to American women wearing aigrettes.

47. God is against anyone bringing banana seed into the United States.

48. God believes that the Japanese are inferior to the Armenians.

49. God believes that it is wrong to shoot and kill rabbits in Rhode Island between January 1st and November 1st, but quite jolly to do so from November 1st to January 1st. He also believes that it is wrong to pot deer in New Hampshire from December 16th to the following December 1st, but good sport to do so from the 1st to the 15th. However, He is against persons living in Colorado, Indiana, Iowa and Kansas shooting deer at any time.

50. God believes that lake trout of 14½ inches should be thrown back into the water but that trout half an inch longer, as served, for example, at the Ritz, make a very desirable and tasty dish.

51. God believes that it was necessary to pass a law making it moral to sell automobile tires on Sunday in New York State.

52. God is against pink lemonade.

53. God believes that Rodin is a very dirty fellow.

54. God believes that it is wrong for anyone to work in any mercantile or commercial house in Utah after six o'clock, except for the six days preceding His birthday, Christmas, which

may be appropriately celebrated by working until midnight.

55. God believes that separate wash-rooms should be supplied for negro laborers in Missouri.

56. God holds that no chiropodist in Connecticut shall call himself a Doctor, but that it is all right in any other state.

57. God believes that the bed sheets in hotels and lodging houses in Indiana should be of a certain exact size, regulated by law.

§ 11

Straightforward Thinking.—There is no such thing as absolutely unimpeded, clear, straightforward thinking. The greatest and most concentrated mind in the world, pondering a problem, will find itself periodically invaded, if only for a fleeting moment, by recalcitrant and irrelevant thoughts—of a bird perched upon the window sill, of a moist eye-glass, of some object upon the writing desk, of a sore toe, of a pretty girl it met last summer—of something alien and corruptive. The strong chain of thinking is made up of the links of many loose thoughts.

§ 12

Under the Southern Moon.—The most curious, and perhaps the most significant phenomenon in current American letters is the gradual awakening of the South. Ten years ago, or even five years ago, the whole region seemed to be as sterile æsthetically as Albania, North Dakota or Greenland, but today it is buzzing with effort, and some of that effort is intelligent and effective. More new *Tendenz* magazines have been started south of the Potomac since the Armistice than in the entire North and West, and though some of them, such as the *Southern Literary Magazine*, lately set up at Atlanta, have been depressingly provincial and amateurish, and others, such as the *Arkansas Writer*, have been frankly Ku-Kluxian and idiotic, there have been others, notably the *Reviewer* at Rich-

mond and the *Fugitive* at Nashville, that have shown a highly civilized manner, and made their appeal, not to mere Confederate patriotism but to the sound taste of a cultivated minority. This minority has always existed in the South, despite its apparent collapse after the Civil War. For years it has been overshadowed by the poor white trash who came to the front during Reconstruction days, and have since controlled the politics and journalism of the region. But now it seems to be getting on its legs again, and the prevailing Baptists, Rotarians and Ku Kluxers are beginning to be challenged.

Consider, for example, what is happening in North Carolina, for long the least civilized of the Southern seaboard states. Here, unlike in Virginia and South Carolina, there are few remaining traditions of an elder and more urbane culture; the state, even in the earliest days, was chiefly peopled by peasants. Nevertheless, North Carolina is showing innumerable signs of intellectual activity, and in more than one way it is leading the whole South. Perhaps its leadership is due to the fact that it has no large cities within its borders, and is thus relatively free from the attentions of professional Chamber of Commerce go-getters. Its politics, of course, remain foul and degraded, and its clergy, with precious few exceptions, are almost simian, but in journalism and education it is making very considerable progress. There is no other newspaper in the South so intelligent as the Greensboro *Daily News*, and few editorial writers in the North so shrewd and courageous as the associate editor thereof, Gerald W. Johnson. More, the influence of this one journal has begun to show itself in the other newspapers of the state, and even the Raleigh *News and Observer*, owned by the Hon. Josephus Daniels, has begun to open its columns to frank and sane discussions of Southern affairs. I point to the literary criticism printed in the *News and Observer* by Miss Nell Battle Lewis. This criticism, perhaps, would attract little notice in the North, but

in the South it is revolutionary, for, in essence, it is a repudiation of all the formulæ that have hampered the fine arts in the South since the Civil War and a plea for the setting up of standards wholly devoid of sectional and patriotic touchiness. Miss Lewis argues that Southern poets should be judged henceforth as poets, and not as Southerners. It is as strange a doctrine to Southern ears as the doctrine that ladies are mammals. Nevertheless, it is publicly argued in the private organ of the Hon. Mr. Daniels, the rest of which is devoted to trying to get him into the United States Senate.

The present efflorescence of Ku-Kluxism in the South is not, I believe, an indication of a general intellectual decay, but a symptom of the renaissance that I have been discussing. The white trash, seeing their hegemony challenged from within, try to preserve it by *force majeure*. The process should be anything but unfamiliar to students of American history, and particularly to students of American literary history. The same thing, indeed, is going on in the North, led by such puerile Anglo-maniacs as Dr. Matthews, Dr. Van Dyke, Dr. Sherman and so on. If these alarmed watchmen were not so painfully conscious that the traditions that they plead for—*i. e.*, of subservience to English precept and example—were not in process of destruction, they would not be so horribly alarmed, nor so shamelessly absurd. In the South, the patriots who man the battlements are less enlightened than Dr. Matthews *et al* and even less intelligent, and so they try to save their hog-and-hominy *Kultur* with the aid of the secular arm. One result is the Ku Klux Klan. Another is the Fundamentalist movement. Yet another is the saturnalia of revivalism now going on in some of the Southern states, notably South Carolina. I am quite serious when I say that the summoning of the Rev. Dr. Billy Sunday to South Carolina was at least partly due to the organization of the South Carolina Poetry Society. This society constituted a direct challenge

to the prevailing *Gelehrten* of the state, i. e., the political pedagogues, patriotic poetasters, hedge professors and other such harrowers of youth. It is thus no wonder that the president and dean of the state university sat on the committee appointed to welcome Dr. Sunday.

What remains to be seen is whether the awakened *intelligentsia* of the Confederacy will have wind enough for the long and hot battle ahead of them. Their victory, in fact, is by no means certain. Not only do they labor under the disadvantage of being few in numbers and widely dispersed; they must also expect to meet with increasingly formidable opposition as the combat goes on. The white trash will find plenty of effective leaders. They will have law and force on their side. Worse, they will have patriotism and sectional pride—and from these things it will be hard for the *intelligentsia* to free themselves. A Southerner, however emancipated, is, after all, only an American, and thus extremely susceptible to bugle blasts and sentimentality. If it ever comes to a square issue between the genius of Henry Timrod and that of any damned Yankee you can imagine, I have a grave suspicion that at least half of the Confederate *illuminati* will follow the tattered battle-flags. If so, then the South will slide down into the swamps again. If not, then there will be a battle well worth seeing.

§ 13

England, Home and Beauty.—Bushy Park, dark and cool green under its peristyle of ancient oaks, on a still and lazy mid-June afternoon, the cows munching the grass beyond the distant lake, in the foreground a little girl seated on a bench reading "Alice in Wonderland," and from far, far off down the road the faint echo of a coaching horn . . . the Embassy Club in Bond Street brilliant at midnight,

with the band playing a swinging tune and the young Prince of Wales, his arm around a fair partner, amiably bumping his fox-trot way through the dancing crowds . . . Piccadilly Circus at ten o'clock of a misty, rainy evening with the colored electric signs taking on the aspect of so many melted opals . . . Rotten Row at eleven in the springtime morning, with its sleek young English girls astride glistening horses, galloping past benches filled with wide-eyed children and their governesses . . . mid-day brandy in the little Tour Eiffel beside the great shining brass palm pots . . . the taxicab jams in Trafalgar Square with the miraculous escapes from death every other minute by the old women selling flowers and the crippled vendors of newspapers . . . London Bridge the moment before the hush of the breaking dawn . . . the tapestry of yellow flowers that covers the fields on the roads to the southland . . . the Ritz at the cocktail hour with its migratory Argentinians searching hither and thither in quest of beauty, and with each cocktail served by three waiters . . . the Blue Lagoon at three in the morning . . . the solitary, lonely lamp at the end of the dim little passage-way known as St. James's Place . . . the cries of "Strawberries!" in the London streets by day and of "Roses!" in the London streets by night . . . the match slot-machine in the bar of the Regent Theatre up Euston Road that marks the Prohibition division line after ten o'clock, to the left of which drinks may be served and to the right of which they mayn't . . . the Thames on Ascot Sunday with its moving picture of white flannel trousers and lavender skirts . . . the famous "Trooping of the Color," all gold and scarlet and crashing music, with a small boy, his hand in his mother's, blowing a kiss with his other to the Queen of England . . .



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To a Water-Fowl

By George Sterling

*THE sea-wind's angered breath
Is chill with twilight, and the breakers reach
Farther and farther up the trackless beach
Where you await your death.*

*The cold, eternal sea
Darkens; the freezing shore lies desolate.
Asleep upon his crag, your careless mate
Knows not your agony.*

*It was no fault of yours
That the spent bullet broke your futile wing;
But pain is on you like a living thing
That razens and endures.*

*Nature nor man may save.
No more your form shall cleave the surf, no more
Go forth exulting from the crescent shore
To ride the emerald wave.*

*Alone you wait your end,
Gazing in quiet on the bitter sea.
So humbler life can hail, as even we,
Oblivion for friend.*

*Where the long grasses sigh,
Now meet, as land and sea and wind are wild,
Nature's supreme injustice and her child
That suffers—ah! and why?*



SURELY the element of novelty, of the unknown, of the untried is a factor of the highest importance in any matter of amorous texture. Just as a traveler, upon discovering an engaging little out-of-the-way haunt, is disappointed to learn that many of his fellow countrymen have been there before him, so is a fellow, upon discovering an engaging cutie disappointed to learn that she already knows most of his friends.



The Chief Mourners

By Oscar Lewis

I

“**A** CURIOUS thing!” said McMurtry. “One doesn’t know whether to laugh at a person like that, which might be dangerous, or to lose one’s temper over the damage she does.”

McMurtry shoved himself farther back in his chair. “Jove! I can remember things! You see, what’s an incident to her up there is the whole show, generally, to the man. There was Kelvin; his name pops into my mind, though I haven’t thought of him in half a dozen years. She almost did for him—but I must say there was some opposition there! A curious thing, that Kelvin episode; an almost perfect bit of drama in its way.”

We waited in comfortable silence. McMurtry seldom talks, and when he does talk he needs no prodding. One just waits and presently the yarn comes.

II

“**T**HIS chap Kelvin was a strange sort,” he began. “It’s rather hard to picture him without making him appear a bit freakish. He was a normal young fellow; normal, that is, when you consider his time and his place. It’s too bad you chaps know so little of your own state! If you could picture that country up there, the part around Rincon, you could understand better about Kelvin. Perhaps you know what those old wheat towns in the valley were like, at once raw and respectable, with all the viciousness and unbelievable thievery of frontier communities, but without the humor, even, to be decently disreputable.

S. S.—Oa.—5

What a study they were, those towns, now one looks back at them; what places to live and observe the human spectacle! Only, of course, we observed nothing. We were very intent on ‘carving out our careers’—that was the phrase then. We didn’t pay much attention to anything else.

“I don’t remember if that word idealism was much in vogue at the time. If it was, we must have used it a lot. Rincon had its group of young idealists, chaps around thirty who were ‘carving out their careers.’ There were two doctors, and a wheat broker, and several others, and young Kelvin himself, who was a lawyer. A group of solid citizens, you see, men of potential possibilities, the ‘future leaders.’ We were all Republicans, I remember, and drawn together by yet other bonds; our hope to make Rincon a ‘Garden Spot,’ our common hatred of Grover Cleveland, our desire, above everything else, to do good. I don’t think I’d care to know what has since happened to that group. . . .

“I believe you can picture Kelvin now; a very conscientious chap, rather grave and serious, and with a strong sense of duty. He was twenty-eight when Mrs. Canfield came back to Rincon. She had not seen him for six years. When she had left for Washington (her husband was the first Rincon man to go to Congress) Kelvin had been studying law in Judge Canfield’s office. She had known him slightly, of course; a dark-haired youth, already serious, behind a desk in the outer room. She was always passing through in those days, a radiant and active figure, absorbed in herself. She never

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failed to drop a nod to the Judge's 'young man.' During the turmoil of the first election she was everywhere, interested and gracious, her good looks a factor in building up the following that won the Judge his seat. She did not come back to Rincon for the subsequent elections. She stayed in Washington. When the Judge died, half way through his third term, everyone in the town wondered what she was going to do.

"She settled the matter by appearing at Rincon a few weeks later and going to live in her house on Jefferson street. That was a sensation. Almost the first thing she did was to send for young Kelvin. During the Judge's stay in Washington, Kelvin had attended to his law practice, such remnants of it as still existed.

"The young man set off, as soon as he received the note, toward the brick house on Jefferson street, his mind, crammed full of legal lore, all ready to be at her service. The figure he found in the library of the late Judge was not, as he had expected, the conventional bereaved wife, enveloped in folds of black crepe. She was calm. Her color was healthy and attractive, and her manner was altogether free from restraint. Kelvin was almost ashamed of the lugubrious sentences of condolence he had composed on his way to the house. She thanked him for them, though, seriously and sincerely. She returned the pressure of sympathy he put into their handclasp. Kelvin, because he could think of no other subject that seemed suitable, and because he had had a real admiration for the dead man, continued the discussion. For an hour they talked of the Judge's good deeds, his public services, his sterling character.

"'I've enjoyed it more than I can say, this talk,' she said when he got up to go. 'It has done me a great deal of good. There were some matters I wanted to ask you about, some business things. But we mustn't speak of them now.'

"It struck Kelvin that this showed a regard for the Judge's memory that was

very appealing. He thought it a rare and touching tribute.

"'No, we mustn't mention them now,' said he. He promised to come next day.

"When Kelvin recalled their conversation that evening he remembered some further anecdotes, illustrative of the Judge's admirable character. The next day, when their business matter had been discussed, he repeated these new memories to her. She smiled when he had finished, a grateful and sympathetic smile. They sat for some time longer, talking of the Judge, Kelvin gazing about at the Judge's study, the Judge's desk, the Judge's bookcases. Mrs. Canfield leaned back in her chair, her fine body relaxed, looking now out into the garden, now at Kelvin himself.

"You can easily realize how all this came to be a habit. Their business relations, the winding up of the Judge's affairs in Rincon, were of the complicated sort that cannot be done in a day, even if they had devoted all his visits to it. His calls, of course, at once had taken on a social aspect. He found qualities in her that he had not, from his former casual acquaintance, believed existed. She was as grave and serious as Kelvin himself and habitually quiet.

"Kelvin had fallen into the habit of engaging the older men in Rincon in conversations about the late Judge Canfield. He encouraged any memories of past days that followed. He never went to the house on Jefferson street without something new to tell; some reminiscence of the Judge's boyhood, of his early practise, perhaps of some humane decision he had handed down from the bench. He would tell these to her as she sat, wrapped in her habitual silence, by the window in the Judge's library. I have forgotten to tell you that they presently became known in Rincon as the Chief Mourners.

"One day Kelvin found among the papers in his desk a franked-out copy of the Judge's first speech in Congress. He read it to her that afternoon. He regretted that its style was not in every way equal to the loftiness of its sentiments. I remember the paper's title:

'A Plea for the Dredging and Widening of Antelope Creek, an Inland Waterway.' This gave little idea of the scope of the work. In developing his theme, the Judge had touched upon the history of the state, its yet untouched resources, the splendor and glory of its future.

"When he had finished he rose and walked about the familiar room, his companion's eyes following him. He paused before a small photograph of the Judge, on the top of the desk. When he was going, she picked this up and presented it to him.

"'He would have wanted you to have it,' she said, when he protested, and it seemed to Kelvin that somehow this made an added bond of sympathy between them.

"He was surprised on his next visit—he had brought three letters the Judge had written him just before the last election—to have her break one of her moods of silence by saying abruptly:

"'I shall have a birthday next Tuesday. I shall be thirty-seven. Do I look thirty-seven?'

"Kelvin's admiration for her was sincere, and he expressed his proper incredulity at such self-slander. He began taking his letters from the envelopes.

"But after he had gone, he remembered her abrupt remark, her sudden flash of vehemence. It was totally unlike the passive tranquillity which was the only phase of her he had known. The memory of it disturbed him for a time, then presently he had forgotten it.

"He considered the matter of getting her some gift, something to express the bond that united them. He reflected on this subject in his serious way, and decided—correctly, I think—that he must invest the presentation of his gift with a certain amount of ceremony. He realized, looking back over the past weeks, that their friendship had been over-serious, a bit heavy. He decided to introduce a touch of lightness.

"When he made the first steps in this direction on his next visit, Kelvin was gratified at his success. He made her promise that on her birthday she

would remain upstairs when he arrived. She was not to appear until he called her. He managed to make quite a pleasant mystery of his intentions.

"Kelvin himself was aware of a certain excitement as he ran up the steps that Tuesday afternoon. He was supposed to be at court, and instead he had run away to come here. Altogether it was an enjoyable affair. He smiled as the familiar maid ushered him into the library.

"'May I come down now?' called Mrs. Canfield at once, and Kelvin, who was busy with his preparations, said sternly:

"'Not yet!'

"Her answer was pleasantly submissive. He called her in a moment, waiting at the foot of the stairs as she descended. She greeted him warmly, almost lightly. They entered the library together.

"'Is it something for me?' she asked. 'Something just for me?'

"'Just for you,' smiled Kelvin. He nodded toward the desk.

"She placed her hand on his arm. 'It's good,' she said, 'to have you think of me.'

"Kelvin was glad this happy scheme had occurred to him. She had entered fully into the spirit of it.

"He looked on with satisfaction as she walked across and regarded his present. It was a picture of the Judge—a crayon enlargement, you know, of the type popular at the time—made from the photograph she had given him.

"Mrs. Canfield was smiling when she turned about, holding the framed picture in her hands.

"'Sit down,' she said to Kelvin, indicating a chair by the window. He smiled indulgently and obeyed.

"'Face the light,' she added, pleasantly. 'Now, hold that position!' She had raised the picture in the air.

"It was a game, thought Kelvin. Imagine her being so playful; he had certainly cheered her up! He sat facing the light, following instructions, wondering pleasantly what was going to happen—

"He did not wonder long. The next second she had brought the picture down with all her strength upon his head!"

III

McMURTRY sighed gently.

"There is a tradition in Rincon," he

said, "that this chap I've called Kelvin went all the way home with the frame flapping about his shoulders. I would like to say that the story is false; that there's no shred of truth in it. The fact is, gentlemen, that I pulled the damned thing off as I ran down the garden walk."



A House

By Ruth Manning-Sanders

*It stands there at the corner as of old,
And in that house if I had lived with you,
I would have painted doors and windows blue,
And sown the garden full of marigold.*

*And of strange things, the strangest is that we
Never lived there: and going by the place
I saw the windows hung with dirty lace,
And the hens scrabbling where my flowers should be.*



RELATIONS between a man and a woman that end suddenly are of two types: (1) those in which there has been a conquest, and (2) those in which there has not.



A MAN wants to feel that he can always free himself from the woman: a woman wants to feel that she can always hold the man.



THE perfect woman is she who is not without flaws.



Complex

By Amanda Benjamin Hall

I

MINGLED with the beauty in John Morrison's eyes was fear—fear marred them. Guilt kept his face from being the divine expression of a really blameless life, and he was sixty. The architecture of his frame was achieved with something of the unity of the Milan Cathedral, vast yet finely considered to the last detail. The shape of his head emphasized line; there was nothing blurred or culpable,—a forehead like a rampart, deep eyes with hollows to either side, nose dazzling in construction, and the thin, grave, smiling mouth some men carry to the grave. His delicacy endured just as his figure remained perpetually lithe and without grossness. He was that rare thing, a big and gentle man with nervousness down the backs of his hands and kindness behind his voice. Yet his eyes were less than direct and his speech less than assured.

During the forty years of his married life he had never once been actively untrue to the uninteresting and unintelligent woman who bore his name. In his thoughts he had trod two hemispheres; he had looked over the bales of cotton cloth in a dry goods store and seen strange lands and things. He had absently taken passage aboard a hurrying little cash box and flown straight through the plate glass window as on a magic carpet to Bagdad. But all this was his own affair. Life had not given him love and he had suffered the denial as a victim of fate's economy.

He was not the least interested in

his wife's caller, a dumpish little lady, very cheerful and correct, who had stopped to give Mrs. Morrison some directions about a church supper. She reminded him of a poor man's pudding, her ingredients were so wholesome yet ordinary to the palate, a pudding without raisins. And so it seemed to be with all the women one met in Compton. He remembered as a boy hearing his mother say that it required two extracts, vanilla plus a dash of lemon, to give an interesting flavor to cake. Some of these women were sweet without the dash of lemon he instinctively demanded. Some of them were all sour like his Martha. . . .

The caller sat in a stiff chair because she said she liked to be a Spartan and abjure comfort, and her stubby little boots did not quite reach the floor. His thoughts rested upon them with humor and pity. She was a poor man's pudding and good for an empty stomach, he meditated idiotically, if one might have eaten her. It was John Morrison's soul that stood empty. He avoided women; especially it irked him to have to do with women of this sort, but he belonged to a traditionally courteous tribe—he suffered the rigors of politesse.

Then a worse ordeal—the coming of his wife attended by a tightening of the complex she had long ago given him. Guilt, senseless and immediate! It was a warm day and the heat affected Mrs. Morrison unpleasantly. It intensified her husband's cruel consciousness of her as a compound of blood and tissue. He

thought with a dreary habitude of swollen ankles that protested stockings, of the angry stoicism of her constricted body, an appalling martyrdom brought to focus in her face. She was fanning. Paradoxically she looked useful. Although several years John's senior, she retained a vitality and assertiveness long ago lost to him. Nourished by many victories, it was as though she had provided her own immunity against age, while John, whose next-to-the-last word was become fainter and fainter, found his fluid of life dilute.

"Miss Crapsey's bin waiting for you, Mattie," said Mr. Morrison in the small-town diction that was a surrender of the fastidious speech once dimly conceived. "I took her in the back sittin' room here where it's cool."

"Land," commented his wife unpleasantly, "why didn't you take her in the kitchen and be done with it? I hope, Mis' Crapsey, you haven't noticed the broken rocker, an' anyhow it's beyond me why Mr. Morrison calls this room cool." She threw him the tilting look of old tourneys in which he had been unhorsed.

"How long you bin here, Mis' Crapsey?"

"Oh, some time. Mr. Morrison and I've had a real pleasant little visit, haven't we, Mr. Morrison?"

"Oh, I'd hardly call it that," sprang to Mr. Morrison's lips, but he belonged to the traditionally courteous, so he said,

"The time passed quickly."

He was vacating the room, but Mrs. Morrison's agility was greater than his dread; like whippets her words came after him, bit at his heels,

"Well, you know Mr. Morrison has a weakness for the ladies."

Weakness. How often he had heard it. Perspiration came out all over John Morrison's head and for some perverse reason he chose to make himself even warmer. He chose a furious and chastening labor

—he chopped wood. Waves of indignant energy flowed through his hands and into the axe handle, till, tiring, he was rid of at least a portion of that terrible virus which breeds murder and self-annihilation.

II

THAT night at supper there were his wife, Minta, his oldest unmarried daughter, and Penelope, who was young, comely and no different from hundreds of girls that make the summer. One saw her exquisite flesh with the implication that it was, after all, no more than flesh and would solidify and become insensate like the flesh of her mother. The fact that he had no boys made it hard for John Morrison. Girls belonged to their mother's jurisdiction; in order to keep her daughters pure and defensible, Mrs. Morrison found it necessary to acquaint them of the presence of evil in the world. Temptation was the word oftenest on her lips. She said that men were naturally predatory, but that this had come about because they were the victims of a marauding evil. They were weak and temptation made after them. When Minta was quite young she was terrified to picture her father as pursued by this relentless bogey; Penelope was more philosophical, and if the truth must be told, it added to the zest with which she viewed her masculine world to know that men were potential exploiters. It was across Minta's life that the shadow fell—the immense mystery of their mother's behavior toward her father, and his broken docility. She wanted to love her father—they were akin. There were the same depths in them, soundless, the same gold shallows of laughter not always understandable. They suffered for lack of more education and more love. At the end of endless groping they seemed sometimes to meet, but her mental fingers recoiled from contact with what her

mother had taught her to believe was less than a godly soul.

At supper John did his best to keep the conversation trivial and buoyant, yet always through fear, steering like a drunken skipper toward the rocks.

"Mis' Crapsey was here," said Mrs. Morrison, sitting behind a vinegar carafe, a catsup bottle and an earthenware teapot, "'bout the strawberry sociable."

Her eyes came across the table and found him. He was superhumanly still, like an insect that hopes it is the color of the tree it rests upon. Her eyes were bright like things fed and watered. Nobody said a word. She ate a piece of bread in pleasant deferment. Fascination held them still.

"Your father entertained her."

They were still, terribly aware. They had heard it all before, the innuendo that was at once exciting and fraught with calamity. All over Minta's body from a thousand little springs the blood seemed to well up in dread confusion.

"Mis' Crapsey saw me go out," continued Mrs. Morrison in light tones, as inducing them to some happy conversational playground. "It occurs to me now. She was sellin' tickets across the street. We bowed. Then, knowing I was out, she rings my doorbell."

A reckless gallantry took charge of her husband. More fantastic than the familiar implication that he was attracted to women would be the notion that they were attracted to him.

"She didn't do anything of the kind," his voice came out with unusual firmness.

"Didn't ring the bell?"

"No."

"What then?"

"I let her in. I was in the front yard waterin' the foliage plants, an' saw her comin'."

"Oh, you *invited* her in?"

A conjured vision of Miss Crapsey,

a fat little fly, decoyed to the spider web.

"No, I wouldn't say that. She stopped and we passed the time o' day, an' she said she was wantin' to see you about some church foolishness or other."

"Humph, she knew I'd stepped out."

"But I told her you'd be back."

"You mean you invited her in?"

"If you want to put it that way, well yes."

There was a horrible interlude. Then the expression on Mrs. Morrison's face, sweet, sirupy, destructive.

"Strange," she said, mouthing the word over and over like one fletcherizing. "Ve-ry strange."

John looked across the table at Minta, his eldest, and best loved. He had adored her baby body when first he held it in his arms, knowing it was part of his own soul he held. He was most the father with Minta, forever hearing her prayers and putting her to bed, translating to her what a queer young fellow he was, packed with dreams and odd perceptions. It had seemed to him a strange prohibition when she was so grown that he no longer attended her risings and retirings in a gabled room that the night made beautiful. He loved her with an intimate oneness that took small account of time and maturity.

And then with her young ladyhood a curious something changed and obscured the perfect relationship. John could never be sure about it, certain of just what poison his wife had set to work. He did not positively know that Minta regarded him differently; he thought her shyness might be due to the inhibitions he had himself bequeathed her. He thought that her coldness was but the figment of a diseased imagination and sick longing. He went out of the way to prove to her possible doubts that, aside from herself, he regarded all women with acidity.

He could never rest on the belief that she was convinced. Minta was beautiful but she had never married because of the sinister at home and her inability to comprehend the riddles that lay in back of life. He looked now and he saw her face, very olive and sculptural beneath its conforming black hair, all pain. Reason was killed in it. It seemed to say, "Who are you two and why are you enemies?"

He shoved his chair back from the table. His blood was weak, his face weak and cowardly. Things were spotty before his eyes and what was fine and fine-drawn in his face had given way before a cringing indignation. Opposite him Penelope, her fresh lip curling, objected, "Oh, can't we have peace? Father, really at your age. . . ." But he did not mind Penelope who was but blood and tissue. His eyes went to Minta's, his whole spiritual self, ungroomed and ragged, seemed begging her for quarter. But in terror her eyelids shivered down. "No room, no room here."

"I'm going out," mumbled Morrison having difficulty with his speech like a man with blood-clot on the brain, "th' movies," and lurched through the sitting room that seemed darker for its stored heat.

"Minta," he heard his wife's voice behind him, urgent with an idiotic fear, "get your hat. Go with him."

He knew it was because she considered it lawless for him to spend his evenings in solitary recreation and could have laughed had it occurred to him that his wife's plight was dire as his own. She suffered from suspicion, she had been insane of it these many years.

John heard a groan from Minta. He felt he could not endure it if she were to come, and once out of the house, walked as rapidly as possible. But she caught him on the sidewalk, her face more pale than olive.

"Minta, you needn't have—all darned nonsense." He told himself that humiliation before her was worse than the liveliest hell of any ingenious imagination.

She met his eyes confusedly, love and anger interfused.

"I'd just as lieve."

III

IN the communal closeness of the motion picture house Morrison saw not the silver screen. What he saw was a progressive reel of his life's drama. He had married mistakenly when very young a schoolgirl friend of his sister, whose cause he had championed because of her overweening lack of popularity. Foolishness and gallantry had brought him to a hopeless pass. In the bond-house of the dozing little town it is doubtful at best if the boy's artistic leanings had been allowed to develop, but marriage with Mattie Goodale had acted upon him like a sudden and smothering blanket. He was taken into her father's thriving little business, and at home Mattie was his wife with a solidity and definiteness that took the very youth out of his blood. At once he knew her Christian and coarse, obtuse and unkindly assertive. He was stunned at his life's interrupted vista—the silence over song.

Yawning through his days in the dry goods store it eased him to watch a girl whose post was under a sunny window. In the concrete, personal sense he was unconcerned with her. It would not have interested him to investigate her character nor her habits outside the store. She was just a young and weedy flower of that dusty town whose women faded so quickly. He seldom had occasion to speak to her and when he did it threw the other, abstract thing out of consciousness. It was just that as he sat most of the day in his glass-enclosed office on the low balcony of the store he could not help but be aware of her and the way her pollen-colored head drank glory from the sun. Sorolla would have seen what he saw and painted it to the despair of lesser masters. As the girl moved the light focused and refocused, or failing to catch her seemed to wait the inevitable opportunity. Sometimes she stood still and unconscious, her pointed

face shadowed and her hair blazing like that of the blessed damozel. She laughed and talked commonly with an endless, inspired gaiety, seeming not to know how obscure she was, prisoned in the store without a future of any kind. The young man told himself picturesquely. "She is no one, and she is all of youth." So one day, to clarify his thoughts about her, he wrote absently on a piece of paper:

There are daffodils and canary birds, and yellow butterflies and they are all good, but the best and happiest sight to see is a girl's head in a sunny window. A girl with gold hair selling ribbons is indeed a joy to the beholder in a dark corner. Who thought of it, I wonder? But no, it was an accident. Nothing lovely is ever by intention. Stay in the sunshine, little joyous one, and be the sun for me, so I may not forget that I too am young.

Sentimental apostrophe, but not without its significance. Some demand falling upon him, John forgot the paper, and his wife's uncle, also a member of the firm, mistaking it for what he derisively termed "a mash note" took it to Mattie in person. That sample of a young man's poetic fancy became the evidence upon which he was convicted to lifelong punishment and persecution. The uncle refused to believe John's protestation that the words written upon that scrap of paper were innocuous. He had no other than the standard of his own life to judge by, and would have ignored the pseudo-love letter had it not been that the offender was related to him by marriage. They had been the irritable opportunity of rubbing home upon the young man the fact that his good fortune is being a member of the firm was due to his alliance with Mattie, that he was there by sufferance.

In the quaint, illogical way of such rumors, John became known in the store as something of a clip. The fact that he gave no outward sign of frivolity, that he was aloof as an archangel made his frailty the greater to be enjoyed—it showed that he had undercurrents. Even in a place no larger than Compton a jovial good fellow might indulge in

promiscuous flirtation and be forgiven. Not so the sensitive man who lives in himself, whose conduct is shy, and who passes the plate in church on Sundays. The current conviction took root fairly by someone saying, "You wouldn't think to see him—"

A lover of beauty, yes, he would have owned to that—a lover of what is beautiful in women! But John knew that what they made of him was a low and a heinous thing, the underhand married flirt, the smug rascal who thinks of ankles, the stander on street corners, the loiterer in doorways. Or so his sick fancy painted it. Whereas truly there were no women for him in all that driveling small community; the women of his soul existed only in his imagination or the books of poetry he had once been wont to read.

He suffered on the suspicion that Mattie had defamed him among her friends, and he was not far wrong. But she had been cleverer than he supposed in that her hints had been veiled.

"Yes, he looks tame enough," was actually a remark of twenty years later, "but I guess she's stood a good deal from him when he was younger. . . ."

These thoughts passed torturously through the mind of the man of sixty, sitting beside his daughter at the "movies," neither of them seeing the picture that passed before them. Eventually they rose and walked home, pausing at the corner drug store where John had invited his daughter to partake of a cold drink. When he paid for it he lurched against the counter.

"Why, Father," said the girl in the same pained voice she had used when she had infrequently addressed him that night, "you're not sick, are you?"

He saw for the first time that Minta, his baby, was entering the forties, and looked it. Her delicate face collecting shadows wrung his heart. She should have married and had a husband to cherish her, but there had been her mother to terrorize her with tales of man's infidelity. Minta, in turn, saw her father as perhaps she had not seen him since childhood; he looked back at

her with such an odd tenderness, as to say all little frets were gone and forgiven, and he would now hush her to sleep with a story. She was transported to those days of authentic innocence. Involuntarily she smiled. Then again she noted that his lips were queer in color.

"Father, you're not sick?"

He said in almost a happy tone.

"Suppose I am?"

IV

WHEN she took his arm to hurry him home he made a preposterous effort to appear careless, to establish dominion over his legs which bore him unevenly. A little later they noticed that he had difficulty with his speech. The next morning he was unable to make anyone understand him. His pitiful dignity and indignation in face of the handicap made Minta exert every effort at tact. She appeared not to notice the strange words and phrases he was coining. "A slight shock," the doctor pronounced it, but when after three days, Morrison's speech cleared, he said that he had every hope of his recovery. Not so the sick man himself, though he appreciated the interlude for its crystal clarity.

Minta was there and between them a lifetime's accumulation of unutterable knowledge. Morrison was enough alive so that love and hate burned in him like separate fires, hate thrusting away the solicitous woman who came with trays and advice, love clinging to the girl who did nothing much but stay beside him.

He was tormented by the eternal question,—had his wife done the unforgivable thing, lied to his children about him? Rid of the old complex of alleged guilt, he saw his soul the white thing it was—through a lonely life unsoiled as an infant's. He had harmed no person or thing; the disease which kept him from financial success had been a form of malignant gentleness. But in this hour he was glad, feeling so free and white. He yearned to gather Minta to his whiteness, to impress upon her the grave joy of his innocence. Once and for all she must brush away the ignominious memory of old bickerings, and understand that the foggy accusations his wife had heaped upon him were built of nothing—nothing. He reached for her hand.

"My baby, there is something I want to tell you."

Her hand rested in his, but convulsively. He sought the deep wells of her eyes and saw to his dismay their look of panic—something terribly chaste and immaculate that shielded itself from shameful knowledge. Her eyes seemed to say that this pain had been put upon her again and again.

"Hush, Father, I know and I forgive you."

. . . I know and I forgive you. . . . It was a lifetime, complete in itself, before comprehension reached him. In his eyes sprang up the flame, the acute intelligence of the dying. Slowly it subsided and he did not trouble to speak again.

So John Morrison died.



A TOUCH of pain is quite essential to the most perfect pleasures.



American Institutions

III

The Saloon of Yesterday

By Charles G. Shaw

“WELL, what’ll it be?” he asked, with a good-natured leer, “What’ll y’have to-night?”

This from Mike—white-coated, easy going, two hundred and thirty pound Mike Kiernan, head barkeep and bouncer of O’Houlihan’s Café Astoria. At least, the sign above the door called it that. Everyone knew it as Pat’s. And Pat’s it will always be.

Mike was the possessor of a heavy red moustache (the ends of which were curled), three gold teeth, an almost uncanny ability to read one’s character at a glance, and a terrific left hook. In his eighteen years of tending bar, Mike had never once short-changed a customer nor thrown one into the street, without due justification. He always knew the latest popular “funny” story, the new brand of cigar, and precisely what to do for any variety of hangover: furthermore, he lent a decided air of importance and dignity to Pat’s. After the fourth round, the next was on Mike.

On the right of the smoky, brilliantly lit, cheery room, was the polished mahogany bar, fitted with a noble brass rail and four colossal cuspidors. Behind it were the beer pumps, bar mops, ablutionary devices, metal shelves, and an enormous mirror-paneled sideboard. On the latter were pyramids of glassware, bowls of lemons, limes and oranges, jars of maraschino cherries and olives, nutmeg graters, sugar receptacles, rows of bottles containing Scotch, rye, gin, beer, vermouth, sherry, bitters, brandy, sloe gin, certain cordials, aerated waters,

and two tremendous cash registers. In addition to the sideboard and the afore-said Mike there was Dan, second in command. Dan was darker and smaller than Mike; likewise was he more taciturn. A scar on the left cheek and a neatly parted toupée embellished his otherwise unadorned physiognomy. Dan was a teetotaler.

Directly opposite stood the free-lunch counter, and what free lunch it was! Great slices of Virginia ham, Saratoga chips, Edam and crackers, pickles, cole slaw, radishes, onions, chives . . . ambrosia, indeed, to instigate the nectar one might quaff thereafter. Then there was the cigar counter, containing everything from a Pittsburg stogie to a Cremo Perfecto, with its amazing lighting contraption, conceived from an elephant’s tusk. Besides tobacco it harbored playing cards, poker dice, imitation leather cigarette cases, several pouches, a few briar pipes, and chewing gum. On the corrugated tin-covered walls were framed photographs of prize fighters, burlesque beauties, soccer teams, political candidates, race horses, clippings from various sporting journals, and a clock that was invariably ten minutes slow. A scanty sprinkling of sawdust served as sole covering for the planked wooden floor. Near the cigar counter were semi-private booths containing tables and chairs, where libations, direct from the bar, were supplied to the occupants.

The clientele of Pat’s was curiously polyglot in character. Cab drivers in

brass-buttoned coats, men about town in shining top hats, laborers off duty, business men, teamsters, fellows out of jobs, flushed and jubilant youths—all knew the saloon and all might be seen any night lined up at the bar, sipping almost every conceivable form of concoction. Beer, brandy, and rye whiskey, however, were the main commodities dispensed at the Café Astoria. Now and then some habitué, a little the worse for wear, might suddenly canter in and order several varieties of liquor which he would toss together and shake up in the same glass. Thus would a new cocktail be born and, accordingly, christened on the spot, though few of these artlessly conceived “snifters” ever survived the infallible test of time.

To the rear of the main room were two smaller chambers somewhat more exclusive in character. One was known as the “back room,” where card games, dice throwing, and wagers of every known type were executed; the other furnished accommodation to those who might enter that aperture heralded as the “Family Entrance.” Both rooms were bare, tidy, and dimly lighted, and each contained a deal table and several unvarnished chairs. It was in the “back room” that the prevailing odds on the approaching steeple-chase, the chances of “the Kid” to beat the favorite, the probabilities of the coming election, the shooting up at Clancey’s, the result of yesterday’s ball game, and the raid up-town last week were exhaustively discussed and analyzed. The other cubicle, tinged with a semblance of domestic savor, served as a rendezvous for gatherings of a certain female element of the neighborhood. In it one gleaned gossip about the new family that had moved into the flat above Mrs. Coogan, about the shameless manner in which Jim Mullen treated his unfortunate spouse, about the current price of

brussels sprouts, about Sam Leiber’s daughter who ran away with an Italian piano mover, about the wake at the Dulvaney’s—in brief, about everything and everybody in the immediate vicinity. Nearby was a rather small and dismal wash-room that reeked of ammonia and contained a barren paper-towel rack.

Over all floated a cloud of contentment, of hazy satisfaction. Even the arguments or encounters that might eventuate were soon dispelled by the predominating influences of good cheer and merry humor. The place radiated jollity. From within the shutter-like swinging doors sounds of clatter and carousal greeted the passing pedestrian—sounds of revelry and ranting, of festivity, of gaiety, of joy. Anyone was welcome; everyone was received with cordiality. That was Pat’s—dear, dirty, old Pat’s—a club-house to those who could afford (and, in many cases, preferred) no other, the distinguishing qualification to membership in which was the price of a drink. What times it recalls! What nights! What memories! Memories of discussions of everything under the sun, from digging for gold in Alaska to the technique of Degas, memories of soul-baring stories told at three in the morning, memories of those who were about to take the chance of their lifetime, memories of those who had taken the chance and lost. . . .

I passed it just the other day, but it seemed a dark and dismal Pat’s. Undoubtedly closed, I reflected, and turning the corner of the street, tried the “Family Entrance.” Several seconds later I was admitted by one who looked strangely familiar, and ushered into the bar—the same old bar. But what was this I beheld? Could I believe my eyes? Not only Mike and Dan, busy and beaming, but two stalwart assistants in addition, dishing out drinks to a howling multitude lined up three deep.



Chloris

By Flora Ebeling

I

CHLORIS ran lightly through the garden and threw herself down on the pine needles. Only five days more and The Interlopers—her secret name for her mother's guests—would be gone for good. Then things would be normal again and she and Mother would have nice times together. The four months of the visit had seemed like an unhappy dream. She glared malevolently across the flower beds to where Miss Aretini's red hat bobbed vivaciously beside Mr. Embree's panama. Chloris nodded her brown head with the scorn of her fourteen years. Mr. Embree was a dyed-in-the-wool bachelor and only came around while the Aretinis were here to oblige Mother. Besides, he was terribly old—nearly fifty. It aggravated her to see the pair in the seat that had always been hers and Mother's favorite; where they used to spend nearly every summer afternoon—Mother sewing and Chloris reading aloud.

The big old-fashioned garden of Pinelands, with its grey stone house, shielded from the rest of the world by the fringe of tall trees that had given it its name, formed the limits of Chloris' domain. The occasions when she penetrated beyond them were few. Once a year, at holiday time, she spent a week in town at Cousin Nannie's—a treat to be looked forward to for months—this, with an occasional shopping trip or matinée, was all. Sometimes she was allowed to spend the day at Eleanore's—her

only chum—but Mother had discouraged this lately. Mother taught her, so that she did not even go to school. Until this year Chloris hadn't minded—she and Mother had such jolly times together. Then there were all sorts of fascinating books in Grandfather's library, and Chloris spent hours curled up on the broad window seat or perched in her favorite tree devouring them. Artful Dodger was her Airedale puppy, Aunt Polly was the old gray tabby, and the disreputable mongrel who hung around the barn she named Huckleberry Finn. Mrs. Hammond, her Sunday-school teacher, she always thought of as Mrs. Pardiggle, until she called her by that one day by mistake, and had to pretend to be choking. Treasure Island was the strip of woods back of the stables, and Zobeide and Amina were the pigeons who came every morning to be fed.

Chloris hoarded carefully all the candles from Christmas trees and birthday cakes. They came in conveniently when she had to go to bed just at the most thrilling part of a story. On Summer nights, when there was company and music downstairs, she would get up and dance, in her bare feet, in the moonlight that came in her window—pretending, at first, that she was a fairy, and, as she grew older, that she was Pavlova. The day after a party she and Mother would feast on what was left of the refreshments. On marketing days, when Mother could manage it, they had treats for lunch.

But the time that they really celebrated was when Father was away

on business. When he was at home they never knew what mood he would be in. Sometimes he was nice, bringing candy with him in the evening, teasing Mother and Chloris, and taking them out behind Calamus, his bay trotter. Then again, for days, nothing that either of them did was right. He would fuss, fuss, fuss until Chloris would steal away to her place of refuge in the big pine tree and plan something nice for Mother the next day.

The old tempo of life, however, had changed with Mother's illness the winter before. For weeks she had terrible headaches, when the house had to be kept perfectly quiet, and then she would cry and cry until she became hysterical. Doctor Stewart said that she must have a complete change and, preferably, an ocean voyage; so, after Aunt Harriet had come all the way on from Detroit to insist, Father gave a reluctant consent to Mother's joining the Misses Seabury—their elderly neighbors—on a trip to the Mediterranean. Chloris could go to Edgemere for a term and, oh, joy, she, with the help of old Maria, who had been with the Carters since before Chloris was born, would run the house.

Mother had come back in the Spring, looking rosy and brown, but different, somehow. She and the Misses Seabury weren't speaking, and Mother said that, if she could have arranged it, she would not have come back on the same boat with the jealous old cats. She seemed happier, but not a bit like herself. She never had time to "spree" with Chloris now; and, when she found that Chloris had been managing on five dollars less a week for the household expenses, she was very cross about it. She talked continually about the charming brother and sister she had met in Naples, and who were coming to America in May. Miss Aretini had a beautiful voice and Mother had promised to manage a hearing for her at the Metropolitan,

through her friend, Mrs. Armand. Her brother, Arturo, was immensely clever, but lack of capital had prevented his successfully demonstrating that fact in Italy. Father said that his cleverness consisted in knowing how to sponge off people to the limit—but that was at the end of the summer.

Father had objected violently when he learned that the Aretinis had been invited to stay at Pinelands, but then he always objected to everything. Before her illness Mother would, however reluctantly, have withdrawn her invitation, but now she had calmly continued her preparations, and Father had subsided in sheer astonishment.

The entire house had been turned upside down; and Mother had appropriated Chloris' chief treasures—the candlesticks she had inherited from Grandmother Morton, the bud vase which Cousin Nannie had given her on the last birthday and—dearest of all—her "baby pillow," with its hand-embroidered slips, Eleanore's gift, for Miss Aretini's room. That was the first deliberately "mean" thing that Chloris had ever known her mother to do. If she had only liked little Miss Aretini, with her shiny black hair and thick, red lips, she wouldn't have cared. But she was deceitful, and so was her brother. He had come up behind Chloris in the dark one night and kissed her. Mother had been very angry when she heard about it and had told Chloris that she must never permit such familiarity again. Foreigners, she had explained, were different from American men.

He and Mother seemed to have lots to talk about in the hours they spent in the library, while Miss Aretini practised in the living-room, and Chloris had either to sit in the garden or stay in her room.

Father had tried to get positions for Mr. Aretini—once in Pittsburgh and another time in Saint Louis—but there was always some good reason why he could not accept them;

and the end of the Summer found brother and sister as firmly ensconced at Pinelands as though they expected to spend the rest of their lives there. Father began to fuss again. He fussed more and more audibly, but for all the effect it had upon the guests, he might have been begging them to stay. Her mother, however, resented it hotly, and the resulting quarrelsome atmosphere made Chloris miserable. Visitors were not as frequent as formerly and, when they did come, they had odd, watchful expressions on their faces.

One day Chloris, coming out in the train, sat behind Mrs. Trumbull and Mrs. Fleming, who were talking busily; she caught her mother's name, and then Mrs. Fleming turned her head and saw her; the conversation was changed immediately. On the rare occasions that she and Mother were alone now, the latter was usually scolding about something.

II

THE climax had been reached the week before. Father had come home in the middle of the afternoon with a very red face. He and Mother had gone into the library and shut the door, but the sound of their voices had filled the house; Father's, indeed, became so threatening that finally Chloris, with a scarlet spot in each cheek and a pounding heart, had gone in to her mother's defense. Father had stopped short at the sight of her and, rushing upstairs, had tossed some clothes into a bag and flung out of the house, banging the door so violently that the glass was shattered.

Then, and not until then, did Mr. Aretini emerge from beneath his sister's bed, whither he had retired—as he explained to Chloris with dignity, while dusting his knees—that he might not have to strike her father—"who is so much older man."

Chloris looked at him with silent contempt. Her father was strong enough to take care of himself; although it occurred to her later, as she was bathing her flushed face, that perhaps he had been no more anxious for a physical encounter than the Italian. She recalled how, two winters before, when their house had been robbed, he had insisted that Mother go down with him to look for the burglars, in spite of the fact that he was armed. Men were poor creatures, she decided, disdainfully. When she was grown she would not have one around the house. She would never marry. She had fully decided that.

Miss Aretini had been thoroughly upset by this episode and, it being now quite clear, that she would have no chance at the Metropolitan, had decided that she and her brother would return home. Father had not come back since that afternoon, but Chloris saw him drive by several times. The news that had sent her skipping into the garden today was that brought by Mr. Aretini, on his return from the city—that he had finally secured accommodations on the steamer which was to sail that Saturday.

The sun was sinking down like a huge copper-gold ball in the West and, through the hush of early evening, came the purring of the motors, content at having escaped the heat and noise of the city. The fresh warm smell of baking cake floated out from the kitchen and Chloris beamed upon the beautiful, friendly world. Things always came out right if you gave them a chance.

The church bell began to ring six o'clock, and Chloris shook the pine needles out of her hair and went in through the kitchen to find out what kind of icing Maria was going to put on the cake. The large black woman looked up from the chicken she was basting. She was nearly sixty and her wool was as grizzled as the stuffing of a hair mattress. She loved Chloris and spoiled her and tyrannized

nized over her by turns. She summoned her now with a motion of her huge floury hand.

"Come here, Chl'oris, lemme whisper somethin' in yoah eah. Did you know yoah maw was packin'? The big trunk in the attic is mos' full."

A cold fear gripped Chloris, blighting the joy in her face. "What do you mean, M'ria? Where's she going?"

The old woman's lips set grimly. She had put up with a lot of "goings-on" in this house because she was used to the place, but this summer had "beat de cyards." "She *may* be fixin' to go see yoah Aun' Harriet, but I *thinks* she's goin' with them triflin' Arenas. How Miss Edith ever come to take up with sech low-flung trash is moah than I can see."

Chloris stared at her for a long minute and then ran, panic-stricken, to her mother's room. Her mother sat before her dressing table arranging her hair, and her eyes, catching the reflection of Chloris's distorted face in the glass, gleamed like those of an animal at bay.

"Mother—you're not—you can't be going with those old interlopers! Are you? Are you?"

"Chloris, what is the matter with you? What do you mean by bursting into my room like this?"

"Mother! The trunk in the attic is packed! You're not going? Say you're not going!"

"And never let me hear you speak of Miss and Mr. Aretini in such a disrespectful manner again. I'm ashamed of you!"

"Mother! Are you going? Tell me!"

"Chloris! You forget yourself. I am certainly not obliged to account for my movements to my daughter. Don't begin to behave like your father, please."

But Chloris had fled to her own room, where she flung herself on the bed in a torrent of tears. She sobbed and sobbed until she was worn out. When she did not appear at dinner,

Maria came up to look for her, but she refused to unlock the door; in the middle of the evening her mother came and pleaded with her until she was finally admitted. She came in and took Chloris in her arms, calling her her baby, her comfort and her treasure; saying that she would never leave her; that she had planned to take Chloris with her to Italy. They would go over to attend Mr. Aretini's wedding and return in the fall. His fiancée's father had made a place for him in his business. The Aretini's villa was high on the hills overlooking a lake. She would love it, and would learn to speak Italian like a native. But Chloris refused to go. She wouldn't go to Heaven, she declared passionately, if she had to go with The Interlopers. Her mother promised, finally, that she would not go and, on that promise, Chloris fell asleep, exhausted.

III

THE next morning she departed for Cousin Nannie's, to stay until the guests should leave, comforted by her mother's solemn assurance that, the next week, they would have good times together, again. The next few days were strange ones for Chloris. Cousin Nannie petted her and Bill, just back from camp, teased her, and her mother called her up each day. But somewhere back in her consciousness, there grew a tiny crack in her faith in her mother's promise. Just supposing Mother really should go, after all! Chloris knew that, if she did, she, Chloris, could never quite believe in or trust anyone again. These thoughts came only at night, however, when she was tucked up in the blue and white bed in Cousin Nannie's guest room, and the noise in the street kept her awake. In the morning would come her mother's old loving tones over the telephone, and her doubts would vanish.

The boat sailed at noon, Saturday, and, that afternoon, Chloris went home, with a blithe heart. Thank

Heaven, she would never again have to listen to Miss Aretini practising scales for hours on end; nor to sit miserably uncomfortable, while Mr. Aretini splashed something out in rapid Italian, at which his sister and Mother laughed immoderately, and which Mother refused to translate. In the top of her bag, smothered in tissue paper, lay the dainty dressing jacket that Cousin Nannie had helped her to make as a surprise for Mother.

She could hardly wait to get home, and it seemed to her that the taxi man fairly hunted for trucks to lag behind. The sight of the housetop among the trees brought a lump in her throat and, from the moment he turned in at the gate, she stood ready, with a hand on the door.

Her father came out on the veranda to meet her, his face purple with rage. "You knew your mother was going, you little sneak! Why didn't you tell me?"



Lovers

By Jane Draper

HIS heart is a banquet room,
A glittering hall,
Waiting in tragic gloom
Her vibrant footfall.
Not till it frames her face
Is it a feasting place.

Hers is a secret cell,
Narrow and dim,
Where purple shadows dwell,
And she keeps for him
Nothing of food nor wine—
Only a shrine.



HOW unsound is the theory that in order to squeeze the supreme joy out of any undertaking, it is necessary to have been often disappointed in that particular undertaking! Surely this is not so. Take the fellow of very many failures and you will invariably note that when pleasure ambles in his direction he either dodges it altogether or makes a sorry muddle of the whole business.



The Widow

By Annette Marquis

THE widow slumped into the semi-comfortable depth of the heavy leather chair in a shadowy corner of the Grande Bretagne lounge. She had been killing time all day; she was almost tired.

A man approached the corner, hesitated, passed on. An interesting man, in the half light. Glasses clinked in the bar. In the dining-room the *maitre-d' hôtel* moved from table to table, tinkling spoons, knives and forks, preparing the table for dinner. A call-boy came through the lounge with cards upon a silver tray. A few dull voices droned discreetly in the shaded corners over early cocktails. The widow waited.

She was a solitary figure. As she sat staring far-eyed into space she crossed and recrossed her silken ankles, which were now and then revealed by the swish and slide of *crêpe-de-chine*. She wore a straight black frock of heaviest silk and most expensive simplicity. Her face had a look of settled seriousness which might have betokened a minimum of humor. In the hotel she had been a puzzle, taking most of the events of the day with a peculiar seriousness and isolation, always wearing an expectant, half-waiting expression, and a look of being baffled without knowing why.

I barely noticed her at first, though I sat so close to her that her slender white arm touched mine. I looked at the delicate pink of the pearls against her throat, admired the emerald, yes, and even the cold, glittering diamonds against the ivory of the delicate hand. Even smiled at the pathetic touch of dainty, almost natural pinkness on the pointed fingertips.

She had the palely dark complexion of the Levantine, with insensitive lips and large dark eyes—appealing and stupid eyes that stared at the passers-by as though asking for the attention that she desired — wistful eyes, questioning, “Good God, what is it all about?”

I tried to classify her; I asked, “Who is she?” The tales were many and adverse. I felt the irony, the wondering, and the desolation of the presence at my side. My curiosity was sharpened. She looked so damnably alone! Day by day I watched her, every day at the aperitif hour, and in evening cocktail-time. She watched and I watched. At last she spoke.

Haltingly, “I see you know a friend of mine.”

I stared at her. “Perhaps. Who is it?”

“An Englishman, a naval officer—” She hesitated and pronounced his name.

“Yes, I have met him but recently,” I said.

We talked a few moments, and then naïvely she told her story. It came at first in fragments; my questioning filled the gaps.

“I am a British subject,” she said, confirming my conjecture that she was Levantine. But immediately she added that she was born in London. Her parents died and she went to live with an uncle. She probably stayed there for many years; I could not question too closely. There must have been little schooling, perhaps dire poverty, though she spoke of a valuable library of the uncle’s, in which she admired the books. “As a child, I used to climb the ladders and look at them. They were

first editions," she said proudly. There was no hint in her conversation that she had opened them.

The tale went on. She married. No word of romance, nothing. "We lived together four years in London. Then he decided to return to his home. He was Greek, you know. After a while he sent for me. I applied for a passport. The government demanded that he marry me. It seems that according to Greek law he had not really married me. We'd only been married by a registrar—" She paused.

"They gave me a passport to come out and marry him. He married me as soon as I came—the British saw to that. Of course," she added hastily, "he was glad to do it—he was so surprised to find out that we were not really married. I don't know whether—he couldn't have known about that law, could he? It was fortunate we found out in time, or I would have lost the whole estate.

"I lived in my home with him for two years—just outside the city. He was a very good husband. I used to say to him, 'Listen, George, men are not made better than you.' He gave me such nice things. I was a prisoner; he did not like me to see people. I stayed in my home and did only what he wanted me to do. I was happy though, and now I miss him dreadfully.

"One day when I was ill he—shot himself. I don't know why. He died before my picture in the drawing-room. He could not say why he had done it or even goodbye. It was terrible. I was ill, miserable, alone—you know it is lonely after seven years—"

Here for a moment the story paused, and we sat silent in the dimly lit lounge. Then in the smoke-laden silence the small, low voice of my companion, so intense, continued the narrative.

"I moved to this hotel—it was different. I got away from that ghastly shot that I heard through my sick stupor, that I can hear now when I think of George. I do not want to return to my home. I want life, joy, happiness—I was a prisoner for seven years. Will

you have a cocktail? And you know my friend, I see."

She paused again. Someone passed and nodded good evening. My companion seemed to cheer and become animated. He passed on, and I saw again the pale, expressionless face that through some trick had given me the impression of an expression. I waited, but she did not speak.

"And your friend?" I inquired softly.

"My friend—rather, he is more than a friend."

I stared at her. "What do you mean?"

She turned and looked me in the eyes. "I shall try to explain—but it will be hard—I can trust you? It is so close to me—so—such a confidence. It is so big and perhaps so disastrous to my reputation. Three months ago I met him. He's wonderful. He's an officer in His Majesty's Navy; he looks so stunning in his uniform—but of course you know him. He—took me places. Dances and dinners. And sometimes we took tea in his flat. You will not tell, will you? It's—living. And I'm so regretting the years I have not lived. And in return—I like him very much more than any other man I have ever known."

I heard a little shivering gasp at my side, and she said, "I think this is love."

I hastily clutched my book and, excusing myself, fled. What could I say to her?

Two weeks passed, during which the loungers of the Grande Bretagne saw little of the widow. Her accustomed chair was occupied by a round little tobacco buyer from Smyrna. The widow was lunching, teaing and dining, always with the tall naval officer. She was another person. There was an expression in the eyes, a tender dewiness, a little softness about the mouth, and an atmosphere of drifting.

In moments of tender reverie, while waiting for him to come from the bar, she confided that he loved her. He called her Angel. He spoke of the soft womanliness of her, her lack of sophistication, her purity. He was so glad

that she was not a modern woman. He swore at her for having kissed another man, on a bet, at a party. He violently pulled her hair and demanded that she kiss him at once. He bruised her lovely white arms, and declared that he hated her—she was so frightened, and so thrilled! Then he fell upon his knees and pleaded for forgiveness. "I've been rough, dear Angel." And she forgave and smothered him in her vast love.

It took two weeks actually to smother him. Or perhaps a new and interesting widow rose upon his horizon. One cannot tell. He has the marks of so many frivolous, sordid affairs upon his handsome face; he has the ruthless eye of the cynic who is finished with women, not because of what women have done

to him, but because of what women have been willing to have done to them by him.

The slender, silken-clad widow is slumped into the same chair. The eyes are again wistful and questioning, "Good God, what is it all about?" Eagerly she comes to take up the position in the shadowy corner—surely he will come today. Ah, yes, he comes! He bows, and passes on into the bar. A veil of sadness shades the pale face—

There is silence. She raises her head and through the open court she looks up at the glorious blue of the spring sky.

"I should like," she says softly, "to travel—away from everyone—It is hard. I was a prisoner for seven years. Do you see my friend sometimes—?"



Quest

By David Morton

HOW should I send beautiful words to find you,
 Haunting your dark with glimmering wings of light,
 And weave at last a silver spell to bind you
 In happy musings all the summer night?
 They should come near you, frail and free of passion,
 Fragile as moths and pale as any star,
 Yet with a swift and delicate gift to fashion
 Beautiful moods of quiet where you are.

So—should there be a sense of music playing
 So near that you are hushed until it pass,
 A sense of weary moths come whitely straying
 Out of the dark to founder in the grass,—
 Know these were fashioned of my dreaming well,
 Beautiful words I send to seek you still.



Cold Water

By Francis Hackett

I

THERE was not one sign of life in the street. At 1.27 a. m. a young cat had crossed the immaculate asphalt, stopping in the middle to sit down in the moonlight and, with a leg airily cocked, to search for the unbidden guest. But that was all. From 1.29 a. m. till 2.45 a. m. there was a hallowed peace. At intervals across the end of the street the Elevated trains passed, with rhythmic rattle, a glance of green and ruby as they disappeared. But this was at the end of the block, where the crude Elevated intersected. In the block itself there was no movement: just a flood of moonlight deluging the shining roadway, the brownstone houses, the regiment of stoops, the curved and affluent balustrades. Who says New York has no dignity or repose? In the velvet warmth of the June night, relieved of visitants, this block of respectable light-chocolate colored houses gave an emanation of the serene, the accomplished, the assured. The luxurious moon, dwelling on this benign spectacle of the West Eighties, appeared to linger beyond its time.

At 2.46 a. m., there came a change. The outer door of No. 32 opened stealthily. A man of stout figure, wearing a short overcoat, his soft hat crushed over his eyes, put out a gingerly foot, turned, pulled the street door shut with muffled noise, and came slowly down, leaning heavily on the thick balustrade.

With weighted steps he went toward Central Park, his head hung down, his face white in the moonlight shadow. The whole complacent aspect of the houses stood accused. An unknown

human being had collided with the solid Eighties, and was suffering.

That he suffered was less than the truth. Irving Swanzy—in full, Washington Irving Swanzy—had dashed himself against the rock of fate. The door he had closed so secretively was the door of romance. At thirty-six, he knew despair.

The house he had left was not his home. His home—where he ought to be, at this moment, but for his romantic nature—was Flushing, L. I. He was a married man, with one child. He had been married, oh infinitely and forever. Compared to his substantial self, his wife was a wisp, and his feelings about her were not unlike his feelings in summer when, after turning out the light and getting into bed, he heard in the dark the tiny hum of the night-blooming mosquito. Would the mosquito alight on him or not? Would his little wife alight on him or not? The questions were asked in the same spirit, annoyance mingled with fear. He could not recall when he had first resented and apprehended, so soon after that far-off day in Binghamton, N. Y., when his mother had willed that he should marry Evangeline.

Irving had not a word to say against his mother. He loved his mother. But she was a woman who would not be defied. His father had called her the Steam-Roller, and there was something in it.

Irving took after his father. He was a man of peace. In the language of medicine, he tolerated his wife. Or rather, he had tolerated her, until the path of romance had led him to the West Eighties.

He raised his wild eyes, eyes shot with pain, as he came to Central Park West. The street car tracks ran polished and empty the length of the deserted street. He clenched his fists, and almost sobbed, as he treaded over and found the stony viaduct that cuts Central Park. Romance! Everything was over. He had said good-bye to Mrs. Wattrous. He had battled with her, and with himself; he had severed their relation. And now what was to become of him?

In the charitable darkness of the winding viaduct he could speak, through his gritted teeth. "The thing is done, done, done!" His voice mounted so shrilly that it frightened even himself. He made an abrupt, a rudimentary, gesture, with a hand parallel to the ground. "It's the end."

He walked under the arches without lifting his gaze, discarding his customary householder's fear of being held up. What matter if he was held up now, when he had lost her?

"I may be fat," he said to himself with tumbling rapidity, his face suddenly burning with the flood of his rising feelings; "everybody says Irv Swanzy is fat and easy-going and don't amount to anything, but now we'll see, now we'll see. I'll see this thing to the finish."

His teeth almost chattered with incoherence, and he clapped his hand to his mouth to stop them chattering. In the midst of his emotion, he could taste his hot salt hand.

Along the dark passage he walked, seething with memories. He loved her. Ever since she came into the store to buy new music rolls, he had loved her. She was his dream of the radiant, the superb, the unattainable. She was a lady! And she loved him! Illicitly! Irving Swanzy, the quiet guy, the paper sport, the dub, he never believed that such a thing could happen to him. And yet it all came about so easy. She couldn't get good results with the pianola and she had asked him if he could come up, out of office hours, to straighten it out for her. The first afternoon,

in the darkened room on the ground floor, was the time it started. Mr. Wattrous was away. He had a big hardware and kitchen utensil supply store in Newark, and he was older than Melissa by years. His picture showed him to be a dried-up, mean-appearing, man. Anyway, he didn't figure at the beginning. Irving was satisfied when Melissa buried her head in his arms and said:

"Oh, let's forget Harmon. He never cared to make me happy, the little shrimp. And we have a right to be happy!"

They had been happy. Even tonight, when they came in from the Park, they had had two lovely hours. No one was in the house except their two selves and Ko Ko, the little dog. Wattrous was over to Newark, on account of the warehouse fire, and was stopping away the night. The servants were off, and came in by the basement. In the back room she had pulled the heavy curtains, lighted the temple incense, and left him alone. First he mixed the cocktails, then he waited, aching for her footsteps on the stairs; in a little while she came back in that yellow silk dress, the dress he liked the best. Except for her mole, she had a lovely clear complexion. She laughed when he said that to her, and she said, "Please Do Not Touch!" But he touched, and it didn't come off. She sang to him, "White Hands I Loved." And then he took her, crushed her, in his arms. At first she yielded, but in the end she said, "Now, dear, we must talk real sense. Sit over there and be good!" And that was the beginning of the end.

Did she love him? It was a terrible question.

"You don't trust me, Irving!" she cried.

He did trust her, every inch of her, but he couldn't think it out. His brain ached with it worse than ever, and he turned into Fifth Avenue with distracted eyes. He was afraid to meet people. A faint relief came when he saw the street was nearly free. A horse plodded by him, dragging an empty delivery

wagon back to the stables, but the driver sat out of sight, huddled into a corner of the seat. He could be by himself. He must figure it out, or go mad.

It was the husband. They had held off deciding what was to become of them so long as Wattrous was planning that European trip. They both knew that, once he was in Europe, they could come together safely. He knew she meant that. He knew she was willing. But the warehouse fire killed that proposition; so this time things came to a head.

What was Melissa doing now? Was she asleep, just worn out, or was she lying awake, thinking of the fate that had overtaken them? She had begged him not to decide. She had clung to him, yes, on her knees, and he had pushed her from him, gently, just before he left. He had cried, too. They had clung together, utterly heartbroken. But he had to face the facts; and it was a fact that she would not leave her husband.

Marriage. He laughed hoarsely. He cared nothing about their getting married. That was all a matter of form. He glorified to think that she said she wanted to be his mistress. Had he been able to take her to Cuba, all might have been well. They had talked of the Orient, and Cuba, and the South Sea Islands, the very next time after he had fixed the pianola. But how can a man take his mistress to Cuba if he is employed in a music store, from nine to five; and if he is forced to spend Sundays and holidays with his wife and child? It was an impossibility. He might have taken her to Boston, on the night boat, or to Atlantic City. But that wasn't the same as Cuba. He wished to be with her, alone in Cuba, by the tropic sea, under a royal palm.

She tried not to be serious tonight.

"I couldn't leave my little Ko Ko," she said with a pout.

He knew she cared for the little beast, she was so pretty and natural with him. He hadn't a whole lot of use for those little dogs, himself, but just the same

he said, "We'd take Ko Ko." And she smiled and admitted she was kidding. But it wasn't any kidding after that.

How could she love a dub like himself. He thought of himself as swimming a great deal in Cuba, and consequently reducing. But Melissa didn't seem to care whether he was a sylph or not. She was not a sylph herself; she said his soul was slender and that was enough. Where she and he parted was on this proposition of the husband. She would quit her husband, but she could not quit him until she got a divorce. She knew right enough he had given her cause, according to the laws of the State of New York, but it would take time to get a divorce. How often they had gone over it, how long a story it was, and how it all came down to his weakness in not being able to prevail on her to see it his way. What was the matter with him, anyway? Women could only love a man who had mastery, and he had never been able to master a woman.

He couldn't stick it. He could not go on with Evangeline. He wanted just to go with Melissa, to start fresh, to be free. The only money they had between them was the money she had with Wattrous on a joint checking account, and his own money in the Franklin Savings Bank. \$342. That wouldn't see them very far, he reflected bitterly, the long lines drawn like threads from his nose. But if they had no money, and if they couldn't act now, what was left? He meant it when he had made it Good-Bye. He could never see her again.

But what then? He halted on the sidewalk. What then? He would have to beat it back to Flushing?

A disgust shook him.

It was not she, it was he who had failed. He was weak. That was it. He had always been weak. From beginning, wasn't he a worm? He hated Ted Schulberger, his chief at the music store, and yet he was never able to down him. He hated the awful people who lived next door to him at Flushing, and would not keep away the rot-

ten dog that frightened Chester. What had the poor kid done to the dog? But why, then, didn't he knock the big Irish stiff and bully who kept the rotten dog? But how can you knock down a big stiff like that unless you are in condition? He had joined the Y. M. C. A. gymnasium, thinking to train so that he could hold his end up, after he cut out smoking cigarettes before lunch and everything. He remembered how he had walked all the way in from Flushing, in order to start the good work, and had arrived at the shop weak and trembling, the palms of his hands wet and things dancing before his eyes. He was shot to pieces the whole morning. Why had the Y. M. C. A. gym fallen through, then? Oh, yes, he couldn't recollect to get a bottle for the sample they wanted. Vangy dug up a bottle at the last, but he could never think to get a cork, and then he canned the proposition. That was the way he was. No character! At the thought of his lack of character, his lack of sand, his spirit rose into a positive yowl of misery. He knitted his brows, and glared into the Park. He'd show them, by God! He wouldn't go on this way, flabby and degenerate.

II

He halted again, his jaw thrust out. For the first time, he saw things absolutely clear. His mind was like crystal. He was perfectly calm and matter-of-fact. He knew what he would do; he would take the straight road, right down to the Battery. The straight road. At last.

His brain, which before had been like a music roll turning the wrong way, now settled into the humming peace of resolution. He looked round him, almost carefree, as he stepped toward 59th street. The birds were clamoring with song before the dawn. For a second he felt the deliciousness of the ripple of the leaves. Then he went grim again. He had made his decision.

He strode. A young cop, stationary, looked at him a bit oddly, at the corner

of 53rd, in front of that very clean looking church. He set back his shoulders, and tried to be unconcerned. He guessed it would be one of those guys who'd take care of him, at the finish.

He thought boundlessly of Melissa, as if from a height. She'd be able to see how he had cared.

The clean break.

It was not till he had turned the bend at Union Square and was well down by Wanamaker's that he realized he ought to have a dumbbell. He couldn't sink without a dumbbell in his coat pocket or, better, tied with a shoelace around his neck. He had a pair of two-pounders at home, somewhere in the closet under the stairs. Oughtn't he to wait till he had been home? But the boy might be wise that something was the matter, and Evangeline would be sure to ask questions. No, he'd end it here. If only Wanamaker's sports dept. was open. He stopped, looking at the masked store. They wouldn't be open for hours. It was tough. He needed that dumbbell to put around his neck so he'd sink. He could not help having the instinct of survival, and in spite of himself he might swim. Even with his clothes on. If he had the dumbbell, a few bubbles, and it would be over.

In the moments he stood still, Irving felt it had become cool. But the air was good and fresh, the sky was beginning to lose that flat blue look, and marvelous colors were tingeing the East. Strange to say, he did not feel so depressed. He felt pretty good. It was a long walk he had had, one of the longest walks for years. But in the cool night it was much easier on the feet than under the sun. That awful long walk in from Flushing came back to his mind—almost run down every minute by crazy trucks and speeding automobiles with miles of billboards and new building sections to go through. No green, outside a few truck gardens. No Nature! He craved nature . . . the word Cuba shot into his mind, like a hot needle of pain. Oh, God. Melissa. His dream was over.

He must be a man. This thing must be brought to a clean end. He must be game. His mouth felt dry, as he pushed down past the City Hall Park. He had a fleeting desire for a drink—just a drink of water! But hell, he'd have all the water he needed pretty soon. He had to be stoical and clear about this thing, and go through with it like a good one, for once.

It was dawn when Irving Swanzy reached the edge of Battery Park. The singular freshness of the sky, the crisp and yet gentle light, the gayety of the birds, gave a pathos to the tragic mood in which Irving found himself.

"This ain't really selfish," Irving said to himself, stopping to look over the little park at the smooth and gleaming waters. "Of course Vangy will make out she's sorry, but she'll go back to her folks at Binghamton and now they can come across the way they're always talking about. The little shaver will miss his Dad, and Melissa will never forget! But it's for the best. If only I had a dumbbell, it'd be easier. But dumbbell, or no dumbbell, this is the end. . . ."

He hesitated.

"I never knew this town could be so lovely," he glanced wistfully around. "I'm glad I'm going to quit when things are so lovely around me. It's like a farewell. I wish I had learned to get up early in the mornings, then perhaps I wouldn't have missed this all the time . . . But too late now."

Stifling his miserable regrets, Irving proceeded across Battery Park, skirting the Aquarium, to commit himself to the waters of the harbor, when he observed for the first time a small group, five or six men, standing on the edge somewhat to his left.

They might see him, though their backs were turned. He thought it better to go nearer, and size them up. They might be waiting for a row-boat.

They were longshoremen. One of them was dripping wet. He must be just out of the water. But they were all looking down, with bent heads. And there was someone on the ground.

"Say," one of the men remarked in a quiet voice, "it can't have been long ago, at that."

"'Bout an hour, Tim, I guess," the man who had been in the water spoke as he bent over, wringing out the folds of his coat with both hands.

No one paid any attention to Irving Swanzy, who was standing back of them, peeking through, to see what he could see.

On the ground was the corpse of a man of forty-five or fifty. He had been drowned. He was coatless. The upper part of his thin body was clad in a cheap striped shirt, the colors of which had run into a delicate lavender. It was open at the neck, and around the yellow throat of this man with hollow cheeks and a gray moustache, there was a brown scapular, long worn and curled in the water. His mouth had frothed a little, and yet he looked passive, merely asleep. His feet were—no, Irving craned closer and saw for the first time that this dead man had only one leg. The other was a dented wooden stump, now beginning to dry in the morning air.

"Had a p'tty tough time, all right," said an elderly longshoreman with a kind of large and equable simplicity.

"He was tired bucking the game," the rescuer said, "I reckon he eased himself off the end of one of them piers."

"Did you know him?" Irving asked tentatively, and then regretted it.

"No, mister, I had no acquaintance with the man," the central figure answered coolly.

A bit apart stood a man with immense broad shoulders, of sturdy build. He was of middle age and had the face of a bishop or a magistrate, but his rough clothes were those of a foreman. In this group he seemed to carry authority. He gazed at the dead face and nodded sagely and sedately.

"That man," he spoke in a strong, deep voice, "that man gave it a good try-out, but he was up against the real thing."

"Here's the ambulance!"

They picked up the dead man, and put him on a stretcher. From the wet patch where he had lain to the mouth of the ambulance, Irving noticed the drip-drip of water as it had seeped from the dead man's rags.

"His hat!" His hat, a stained bowler, had also been rescued. It stood by itself on the ground. Someone picked it up and carried it to the ambulance.

Irving suddenly felt cold. The water must be cold, too. Poor guy, he must have been up against it, all right.

"Picked up another yestiddy, p'tty near the same spot," one of the straggling silent ones spoke, gazing after the ambulance as it whirled away. "Well, gotta beat it," and he moved off.

Irving was alone, standing on the wet patch the body had made. He hastily stepped off and turned his back to it. That, he thought, was the third he had ever seen. There was his father, when he was at grammar school, and old Aunt Myra, and this.

It gave him a turn.

Melissa, at any rate, was far uptown, warm in her bed. Everybody he knew was warm in bed. That was something, after all.

Remembering his resolution, however, he went to the edge of the water and looked down.

Some sodden straw, a bit of packing-case, and a gray bloated object the size of a cat, sawed feebly against the wall in a lazy swell of the tide.

He disliked it.

Over there, in that white restaurant where the oranges were in the window, he could get a good hot cup of coffee. He needed a cup of good coffee. And an egg sandwich.

But he wouldn't go back. He would go away! He'd get a shave, and then . . . then he could catch the boat to Atlantic Highlands, and spend the day in the sun.

If he got a bit of sleep, he could have a good swim.



Spleen

By Babette Deutsch

THE sun slips from the sky
 Like a ruined petal
 Dropped behind a sorrel-colored screen.
 Trees turn away from this wind.
 Their spleen is human.
 What am I thinking of?
 —Nothing. I said, nothing. The love
 You gave another woman.



THE most perfect pleasures appeal to our tastes; the most enjoyable, to our emotions.



Knerr: The Genie of the Ha-Ha

[An Essay]

By Walter E. Sagmaster

I

FOR eight years I have been following his work faithfully and assiduously, and for eight years I have laughed until the tears came. The others may let down occasionally; he never does. There is about him that dependable consistency always visible in the first-rate man. There may be a weakness in the plot: if so, it is more than made up for in the caricature itself, or if not in the caricature, then there is sure to be ample provocation for good, honest belly-rocking in the inimitable dialogue.

In these eight years I have witnessed, I suppose, not less than eighty explosions occurring in the penultimate picture, with the two inevitable *enfants terribles* snickering in the background, and with the consequent eighty expeditions by various gentlemen (and at times even ladies) in garments rendered painfully fragmentary by the recent blast, in diligent search of the aforesaid *enfants*—who are more likely than not to be found by the careful reader concealed in the overhanging branches of an oak that skirts the very road which the expedition travels. And never yet, in all these eighty-odd times, have I encountered an explosion which failed to send me into undulating gales of laughter, to coax into submission the as usual obstinate breakfast, to make even Sunday morning, the damndest four hours of all, very nearly tolerable. . . .

I speak—and pray the indulgence of all my readers, particularly the feminine element, who are chronically disposed to

look upon life as a "serious proposition"—I speak of none other than H. H. Knerr, the *deus ex machina* of "The Katzenjammer Kids." I use the title, however, specifically, for as a matter of fact, Knerr is not the originator of the cartoon, the work of the actual originator, Rudolph Dirks, now appearing under the title "The Captain and the Kids." It seems that the thing had its inception in the brain of Dirks something like twenty years ago. The early appearances of the cartoon were copyrighted by W. R. Hearst. Later, Dirks left the Hearst employ. The title "The Katzenjammer Kids" was copyrighted by one of the Hearst producing feature services, and remains so today. About eight years ago Knerr was hired by the Hearst people to draw the cartoon, and has been doing so ever since, under their copyrighted title "The Katzenjammer Kids." Dirks has for some time been drawing the thing for the Press Publishing Company, of the New York World, under the title "The Captain and the Kids," as above mentioned. Both versions are widely syndicated. The estimate is that the Hearst version reaches something like five million people throughout the United States, Canada, and foreign countries.

Now the odd thing is that the company holding the copyright to the title "The Katzenjammer Kids" certainly evinced a stroke of the purest genius, or of the purest luck, which is often the same thing, in selecting this Knerr for the job of imitator. For not only did they secure a copyist whose drawings are so faithful to the original in all

principles of caricature as to cause the sophisticated follower of comics, habituated as he is to viewing the horrible examples turned out by hacks attempting to mimic the work of first-rate men, to emit something very much resembling a gasp. This Knerr, it seems, is the very soul-mate of Dirks; one might almost say, an artistic *doppelgänger*. As a matter of fact, he does not *copy* Dirks' drawing so much as he *enters into* it. It is much as if the two men were endowed with an identical capacity, and the fact brought to light by the merest chance—certainly two of the oddest contingencies, and a coincidence not a little uncanny.

And not only has Knerr completely assimilated Dirks' style of caricature, but also, to a great degree, that of dialogue and situation. But here a division sets in. Here the law of individuality takes its revenge. And we find that the difference between the two men is at bottom a difference in the quality, or rather the nature, of their humor. The humor of Dirks, for all its occasional verging on the subtlety of character analysis, tends toward the obvious humor of the slapstick; whereas that of Knerr, for all its undoubted foundation in Dirks' slapstick, has not only shown in the past very interesting tendencies in the way of a far subtler humor, a humor of character rather than merely of situation, but is, moreover, constantly leaning more strongly in this direction. Knerr's humor is both deeper and broader than that of Dirks; there runs through it a vein of satire with which Dirks seems never to have been on speaking terms. Dirks' work is simpler, more superficial, more *innocent* than that of Knerr. His comic strips usually consist of a single situation, passably funny, carried through some twelve pictures to a conclusion at once obvious and inevitable.

In Knerr there is vastly more complication: probably the very fundamental reason for the loud laugh Knerr extracts from the reader compared to the mild chuckle derivable from Dirks, is the former's habit of piling incident

on incident, each of them more heart-rending than the last to the unfortunate victim, until in the end there is a murder in his eyes which seems fairly to leap from the page. This is exaggeration *par excellence*, and here it is that Knerr excels immeasurably. From the very first Dirks' work has been of the mischievous, innocent, "good fun" type; but throughout the work of Knerr there runs a distinct vein of the Machiavellian. Dirks will appeal, on the whole, to the humorous man; Knerr to the witty man; though in the very nature of things, of course, each makes occasional excursions on the other's domain.

II

THE types themselves are unequalled in the entire world of cartoonery. So far as the actual inception of the originals goes,—that is, of the Captain, Mrs. Katzenjammer, the Kids, the Inspector, John Silver, etc.,—the credit must, of course, be given to Dirks. But in several instances Knerr has left the stamp of his peculiar genius on many of them, either supplying new characteristics or, owing to his greater depth of humor and more pointed satire, accentuating certain old ones in a way all his own.

In Knerr's "Captain" we have, fundamentally, the eternal boy. In his ceaseless battle against the mischievous deviltry of the pristine boy, he never quite loses an inveterate sense of personal antagonism, and, upon victory, either real or fancied, an indulgence in gleeful, buoyant raillery at the fallen which is so distinctively an element in the boy mind. His "He! He! Smart Aleckers!" hurled in naïve jubilation at the departing *knaben* to whom punitive justice has just been administered on the proper locality, according to tradition at least, for such administration, is irresistible. There is very little difference, after all, between Hans or Fritz and the Captain—only such superficial divergencies as the donning of long pants and the acquisition of a taste for pinochle may create.

The Captain, too, is a walking, breathing essay on the honest humor that may be derived from the judicious handling of English speech transposed into the German constructional idiom, as well as from broken English in general. "Look! Der tank is gebusted!" shouts the Captain in consternation. "Der vater iss out-gespilt!" And the excitement-engendered "enough iss enough, but too much iss plenty!" has no equal in all English.

I hold no brief for the humor in broken English as broken English. There is nothing more wearisome or disgusting than to sit through a vaudeville performance in which a fat zany got up to represent a cross between a Heidelberg professor and a Saxony brewer tirelessly spouts his inane "Vot iss?", or "Could I go mit?", or "Dot vass not ein lady, dot vass mine vife!" etc, etc. But through the mouth of a really humorous character creation, placed in a really humorous situation—then broken English certainly may lend no small aid to the creation of a really humorous effect. "Hey, Kink! Der fuse iss keeping on fusing!" may not in itself represent the highest possible example of humor, but its effect is sure and lethal when emitted from the mouth of the Captain, as Captain, while hoofing it for all he is worth after the fiery splutter that sweeps on ahead of him nearer and ever nearer to the interior of the well-stocked powder house.

In this matter of dialogue Knerr has in many respects gone far beyond his teacher. He seems to have a peculiar knack of greatly enhancing the ludicrousness of a situation by means of the dialogue immediately preceding it. "Now," says "Sandy McPherson" from a face buried in a million convoluting smiles, lifting his strangely bloated bagpipe preparatory to the rendition, "Now I'll gi' ye the Bonnie Waters of Doon!" But the good Sandy, upon attacking the mouthpiece with a mighty lungful of wind, succeeds merely in impelling from the various pipes of his instrument so many streams of coal-black ink, each of which terminates in one of the serene

upturned faces of the audience. . . . Such a climax is worth a hundred of Dirks' *finales*; it has that rare, lasting quality of humor which, like that of Mark Twain's "Jumping Frog" story, extracts from one the loud guffaw no matter how many times it is reviewed.

Mrs. Katzenjammer herself—dear soul—is quite the apotheosis of gullibility. Her mind travels on an average of some two feet an hour. Compared to the rapidity of its association of ideas, the trip of a snail across a wheat field is one wild, insane flight. En route with the Captain after the fugitive splutter at the constantly receding end of the fuse, she naïvely inquires: "Iss it fireworkers?" And when the carved pumpkin that the dear boys have placed atop a stuffed dummy and crowned with a large picture hat crashes fortuitously to the floor just as Mrs. Katzenjammer begins to shake hands with the "new school teacher," the dear lady cannot but exclaim, in the most intense consternation: "Himmell! She has dropped her head!" . . .

And what a picture it makes when the good dame, an offspring in either arm, both of them fresh from the consumption of some new and ingenious project to make life the nearest possible equivalent to hell on earth for all concerned, inquires, amid an expansive wreath of smiles and sublimely unconscious of anything untoward, if her "darlings" would care to indulge in "apple dumplings." She is inimitable, this Mrs. Katzenjammer—a first-rate foil to the eternal Captain. By dint of having made it a life study, the Captain requires but the slightest hint to see in a flash the entire detail of each new successive scheme which *les enfants terrible* concoct. Often he can "feel it in the air," even before there is any tangible clue whatsoever. "Something told me it would not go on!" he observes, in pitiful dejection amid the *débris* of a catastrophe, with reference to the late relative peace and *joie de vivre* he experienced. And "Didn't I say look ould"? is a frequent aftermath ad-

dressed to some unfortunate victim of pre-adolescent hellishness.

And it is this very astuteness of perception, this very quickness and keenness of insight of the Captain's, which so admirably offsets the almost superhuman obtuseness of his wife. I may forget Beethoven's Third Symphony, I may forget Keats' sonnet on Chapman's Homer, but I seriously doubt that I shall ever forget Knerr's Captain, not so many Sundays ago, turning upon his spouse in the midst of one of her particularly adamant-headed observations, with red-hot exasperation bursting from his globular countenance and from his lips the pungent ejaculation: "Voman, you vill drive me nutty yet!" It is the first of such outbursts that I can recall in all my eight years diligent and studious attention to the colorful life of this family, but I might say that certainly I am the last person on earth who would venture to call it unjustified. . . .

This charmnig obtuseness and gullibility of Mrs. Katzenjammer is the suggestion of Dirks. There are evidences of it in his work at least four years before Knerr began to draw the thing, and it is possible that it appeared even before that. But Knerr seems to have made more subtle use of the trait, as evidenced, for instance, by the example just quoted.

III

THAT slapstick plays a large part in this stuff of Knerr's, as it does in that of Dirks' I do not for a moment deny. Full many, indeed, for instance, have been the resounding impacts in the immediate vicinity of the trousers seat which the Captain and his various cronies have suffered at the expense of the *enfants'* unsuppressible Will to Trouble. Of course, there are some persons far too ossified—or, as they would have it, too "matured"—to give even the polite chuckle, much less the frank guffaw, to such unrefined forms of amusement. They are the kind of bombastic pretenders and pseudo-intelligent hypocrites, for the most part females, who

can see "nothing funny" in Charlie Chaplin—the sole reason being, as near as one can judge, that Charlie prefers to deal in low antics instead of the dramas of Leo Tolstoy. On such as these, George Sand pronounced the final verdict when she said: "*Enfin, se persifler soi même, c'est se préserver de la sottise ivresse de l'amour-propre exagéré. J'ai remarqué que les gens qui ne plaisantaient jamais étaient doués d'une vanité puérile et insupportable.*"

That some such ridiculous vanity is at the back of all such pompous inhibitions of the most natural desires, I have not the slightest doubt. And invariably it is indicative of that species of half-education which stops at the high-school reading of Hamlet and is shocked indeed in later years to discover that the same fellow who concocted that lugubrious opus is also responsible for so "silly" a thing as Sir John Falstaff.

I realize that the slapstick, as slapstick, could never hope to bring anyone above the mental level of a butcher back to it the second time were it not for the fact that the deeper and more subtle elements of Knerr's humor are deftly, naturally, and convincingly interwoven with the slapstick itself. It is not while the Captain is obsessed with gloomy forebodings of impending trouble that the infuriated wildcat, suddenly unleashed by the Kids, makes a bee-line for his trousers seat, but rather while, in his fancied escape from danger, he is waving his arms and exclaiming in boyish ecstasy: "Hooray! Free as der dod-gasted air!"

Of the original subsidiary characters, probably the most engaging is old John Silver, the intermittently reformed pirate of the high seas. He remains little if any changed, in himself, from the way Dirks first conceived him. If Knerr has given the character any added interest, it has been through the placing of him in more interesting situations. There is ever a crafty scheme being hatched somewhere in the back of John's brain. For all his apparent satisfaction with the relatively quiet life (even granting the Kids) which, in Knerr's

version, he now pursues with the Katzenjammers, it is only temporary, only an interlude, as it were, until his old blood once more begins to boil with insatiable longing for the plunging galley with its skull-and-crossbones dauntlessly taking the breeze astern, and old John himself on the bridge squinting through his glass for possible prey. He is, both in Dirks' and Knerr's versions, the last dying flicker of romance hanging on desperately to the most prosaic of all worlds, and at present thrown by a heartless Fate among a family wherein the even tenor of bourgeois complacency, if, by dint of the Kids' tireless energies, it is not always in evidence, is at least strongly favored on principle. Forecasting is always a perilous business, but I venture to predict that some one of these Sundays—say about late July or early August, when the weather has more or less made up its mind as to its course—John will suddenly throw the whole dreary business off his manly shoulders, hie to the bosom of his hearty mates, to the inevitable and inexhaustible bottles of rum, to the occasional chests of dead men, and to blue nights under white stars.

The Kids themselves, though ostensibly the most important elements in the strip, are, as a matter of fact, merely the incentives to the main action—merely the cornerstones, one might say, for the erection of those ludicrous situations and those strokes of character sketching which form the crowning arch of the work. They are representative merely of the youthful lust for deviltry; they set their fuses, bore their holes, fasten their ropes, uncage their wild animals, etc., but it is the reactions of the varied gallery of adults to the resultant situations which are of primary interest. The Kids remain virtually in Knerr as he has taken them from Dirks.

But the chief subsidiary figure at present holding the boards in Knerr's version, and a character peculiarly Knerr's own, is the darkey, lately graduate from Harvard (the satire is almost cruel!), who is King of the tropical

island upon which the Captain and his family have been cast following a shipwreck. His perfect English in the midst of a veritable slaughter of the language is indeed rich, and the subtle contrast involved is highly distinctive of Knerr. "I thought you might like to see how my Court of Justice works," says the King, pointing out to the Captain a venerable African with tufts of white hair behind his ears, a fat cigar in the corner of his mouth, and a gavel in his fist, seated on a barrel beneath a striped canopy on bamboo stilts, and attended by the "army": a gang of innocent-looking blacks with lips two-thirds the size of their faces and armed with what look suspiciously like tin spears. And a moment later the Captain observes: "Dot's vot I call dingbusted justits!"

He is quite an irresistible person, this king, with his yellow crown, red tie draped on a bosom in the altogether, dress coat with incongruous white cuffs protruding from the sleeves, a short girdle of leaves about the waist (in all proper deference to convention), brass anklets, and the most expansive of smiles crowned by the most obvious of monocles. He even condescends on gala days to don a silk hat, as he parades his aboriginal Champs Elysee with his supercilious queen on his arm. (I am not familiar with the lady's college, but obviously she is the ultra-cultivated flower of some super-Harlem.) A superb sketch indeed is this King, a good sport, a real decent sort of chap, always ready for the loud guffaw on any reasonable provocation, and—one sees it indisputably in his eyes—a true lover of the arts.

IV

AND yet I wonder if there may not be a grain of sober truth behind this delicious fancy of Knerr's. I have come into contact, more or less cursorily, in Literature classes and at symphony concerts, with quite a few of these nouveau-civilized blacks, and it has occurred to me that if there is any feasible

hope whatsoever of a final settlement of the negro question, it lies within the mahogany craniums of these gentlemen. Certainly, if things continue at their present rate, the negro problem will within the next twenty years at the outset cause all other problems to fade into a remote insignificance.

I do not believe there exists within the negro race anything even faintly bordering on the capacity for extraordinary æsthetic self-expression which occasionally breaks out in their paler brethren, and to which we give the name genius. But I do believe that up to a certain point, far in advance of that which now generally obtains, the blacks may be educated, and that they might one day effect, without external aid or interference, a society on the whole comparable to that which is now operative among Caucasians. The important thing required, of course, as in all movements of whatever sort, is leaders, and that these leaders are rising up even today, in spite of the clamped-down suppression, direct and indirect, which the whites have sought to enforce upon them, I have no doubt whatever. Even granting that the coons as a whole will never rise appreciably above their present status, the leaders remain. Leaders for what?

It must be apparent to even the most superficial observer that the fundamental reason for the antipathy of the whites toward the blacks is not that they are offering serious economic competition, nor that their ideals, habits, and predilections are at bottom different from those of the whites, but purely and simply because they are black. All other divergencies between the two races may be removed, but the one will always be white and the other always black. The thick lips may be somewhat thinned, the hair may become less curly, the voice may grow somewhat more Anglicized, but the skin will always retain its sombre tint, and so far as any practical intercourse goes, the lightest tint will always be as strong and insurmountable a barrier in the white mind as the very darkest shade. Whether

they may ever as a mass be truly educated or not, the fact remains that the negroes are at least waking up to the point where a new accession of desires, higher both as to quality and quantity than any they have previously experienced, has taken possession of their imaginations.

These desires are conflicting more and more daily with those of the whites, to whom they were heretofore peculiar. The condition is already grave; not only as regards sex, but economically, politically, socially—in every way imaginable, the awakening mind of the black man is feeling its way, sounding depths here, testing weak spots there, weighing values one place, questioning traditions another place. . . . Sooner or later, in short, the big break must come—sooner or later the whites and blacks must separate. It is, on the white side of the question at least, a matter of taste, and once again: *de gustibus non est disputandum*. The sophomoric Lincoln could not see this. Otherwise, he would have spent less time in writing prose poems about the equality of all men regardless of the color of their skin, and more time on the fitting out of vessels for the transportation of the coons to their native Africa. There would have been no real difficulty, certainly, in purchasing sufficient land, and no objection, certainly, to the erection of a few houses of learning for those blacks who might care to attend, thus eventually forming leaders from their own stock and dispensing with any white interference whatever. This would have been a far more logical course than to have allowed the blacks something like sixty years of a constantly increasing conviction of their independence of and equality with the whites, until today, when the big break finally does come, what might once have been very quietly and expeditiously performed will, in all probability, entail much noise and consternation, and doubtless not a little bloodshed.

But when at last the smoke is cleared, the blacks will have their leaders. These leaders are quite numerous in the coun-

try today. We have negro novelists, negro poets, negro editors, and negro statesmen—at least potential. And, to return to the main theme, it seems to me that Knerr's black King, ruling with an iron and yet judicious hand his little tropical island—a graduate of Harvard, a speaker of English undefiled, a lover of the arts, a man with a fine sense of humor, a paragon of culture—one of the few real aristocrats that America has, God bless her soul, produced—perhaps this dusky ruler of Knerr's is not so very far from what we may one day see in the flesh.

V

THIS man Knerr is a serious artist before he is a buffoon, and that is the simplest possible account of the noteworthy effect he secures in his work, and for which so many other cartoonists strive for in vain. His edge on them all I would place in his power of adding to his subtle caricature of human nature a true genius for the slapstick, and above all, a rare ability to join the two convincingly. It is in this latter quality, indeed, that the ability of Charlie Chaplin lies—unique among movie comedians as Knerr is among cartoonists.

The mob, of course, doubtless overlook Knerr's subtlety to a great extent, for the mob, quite apart from its inability to detect subtlety under any circumstances, invariably regards humor of all descriptions as on a single plane:

a man is either a funny man or a serious man; if the former, he is "light"; if the latter, he is "deep." There is a depth to humor of which the crowd is sublimely innocent. Indeed, in true humor there is, as often as not, more real depth than in the more "serious" methods of treating life, because the true humorist must first have descended to the very foundations of life—must first have been, as it were, a *seriousist*—and then have come forth into the light with the very natural conviction that the only way to get the best of the malignant designs of Life is to laugh at them. Through some such experience I do not hesitate to say, without knowing the man, that Knerr has passed.

Knerr is an artist—on a different plane than Raphael and Shakespeare, I grant—but an artist, nevertheless. There is in his work that essential admixture of seriousness, hidden below his more superficial buffoonery, which differentiates for all time a Mark Twain from an Eli Perkins. He has not all the elements requisite in fine art—no; but he has many of them. And he, and those like him, must be given some place, low or high, in the little group of select souls which the world has labored for some two billion years to produce. I admit that there must be a dividing line somewhere. We cannot call Knerr and Keats artists in the same breath, but neither can we call Knerr and Bud Fisher buffoons in the same breath—and the latter, if anything, seems to me the greater sacrilege.



THE happiest moments are always those that slip by unobserved. The joy of them comes afterward. But the minute we begin with, "What fun this is!" we realize that something is lacking.



Optimism

By Arthur T. Munyan

I

IN big industrial companies there is some attempt made to appraise men's qualities, and to direct men's effort along the lines to which each is most adaptable. The attempt is generally superficial and inexact. Wyman is brilliant and garrulous, needs to be listened to but not too long; Royden has the peculiar gift of keeping on the track of a subject and holding others to the point in debate; Jones is deft and rapid with drafting. Well and good, and very useful knowledge, but not a very thorough appraisal.

The pattern of personalities against the background of an industry is an intricate and elusive thing, like a Brangwyn etching, but infinitely complex. It is generally the hidden theme of character that counts. Any imbecile can see that Wyman is garrulous, but who knows of the unscrupulous, knifing ambition that motivates him day and night? The case of Gregg and Ardmore intrigued me for years; the almost unguessed peculiarities of these two men had so profound and far-reaching an effect on the history of the company and other lives.

Even Ardmore's singular traits, obvious as they seem now, were hidden from most of his associates. People, for example, were inclined to think he had a sense of humor; he was the most humorless man that ever lived. The nearest he came to humor was an elephantine levity, which he generally employed to mask a threat. "If you don't kill that job, Jones," he would say, "you and I are going to have a

rough-and-tumble on my office floor!" His satellites would rock with glee at Ardmore's merry quip. But Jones would know that under it there lay a virulent threat.

His isolation showed in one way, and concealed in others, Ardmore's essential vanity. The General Manager was harder to get at than the Pope, not because he was pressed with duties but because he fancied the rôle. When he emerged from his private office, with its secret buzzers and its private telephones, he was an aloof or a grandly condescending figure.

It took me years to discover what I record here. Ardmore was an extremely erudite man, versed in law, engineering, and finance, a man of polish and unique presence. Nobody would call him an ass off-handedly—not Ardmore with his big frame, his high forehead, his distinguished bald head, and his disturbing eye-glasses. But an ass he was, essentially, and he lacked the humor and poise and plain sense to review his acts. But all this was not at once evident. His utterances did not betray him, for one thing; they were safe, impressive, like those of a presidential candidate.

But his vanity was there, really showing itself, robbing his every other quality of force and integrity, making a buffoon of Ardmore for all the grandeur of his position and air. He had a separate secretary, a tight-mouthed and portentous maiden, and a personal office boy, smug and aloof and insufferably full of himself. Ardmore loved all the dignity, and fustian, and mummery with which he surrounded

his position. He loved it as passionately as he loved himself!

The office played up to him. In their speech, they capitalized the pronouns referring to him, they spoke his name as a parson speaks the name of God. Some of the office force never saw him and boasted of working for a man so almighty as never to be viewed.

In conferences he spoke smugly and safely in impressive idioms—Lord! but one got tired of those tricks of speech!—and not infrequently voiced real ideas; he was not a fool. He honored his lieutenants by an occasional touch on the shoulder, called one by his first name, indulged in a bit of personal banter. Most of them strove for these rewards. His way of using men was to make sycophants of them; he did not despise boot-licking, he loved it.

Conversely, he would brook no contradiction or criticism. At the hint of polite disagreement with him he would lock his lips and crush his informant. Any executive who offered him advice contrary to Ardmore's preconceived hopes was virtually sent to Coventry, was never again consulted, was left in a *cul de sac* in the company. An engineer who quoted a law of nature adverse to Ardmore's optimistic belief became a pariah. In conferences he was commonly mollified and blandished by the most appalling perversions of truth and fact that have ever been uttered.

I have just said that he was not a fool, but then again he was, really. His egotism might not have been so dangerous if he had coupled real wisdom with his absolute monarchy. But he was extravagant with ideas, let his imagination run wild, stifled his common sense with optimism. He conceived the most grotesque machines, commanded his artisans to build them, and blasted them with curses when the what-is-its refused to run according to his febrile dream.

Small wonder that his organization was full of schemers and toad-eaters and sullen misfits. In this mess of intrigue, Gregg was one who held to the course of life he had chosen and yet

maintained his honesty. The interlocking of these two personalities was a singular thing.

II

GREGG came into the company before my time as a draftsman and was likely to have stayed one owing to his singular speed and accuracy. But an opportunity came to him to get into the field to put up some sort of process building. He did the job creditably and was promoted to a circle in which he first came into contact with Ardmore. He adored Ardmore at once—genuinely.

There is no single word for that trait of character which was Gregg's most salient one; I can only say that the fairies had made him the gift of being able to see and believe whatever pleased him best. Ardmore was polished, he was what is sometimes called a gentleman, he was older than Gregg and higher in the world. Ardmore evoked Gregg's inherent loyalty and need of some paternal creature above him. Gregg saw in Ardmore all the kindly qualities of leadership that Nietzsche found for a time in Wagner; he found them because he wanted to find them.

As the praise of children is more perfect than that of adults, just so was the adulation of Gregg more pleasing to his superior than the flatteries of other men. A mysterious bond drew the two together, neither understanding it, nor the other, nor himself. Gregg became Ardmore's most valued adviser, and so strong was the tie that Gregg actually bearded his chief more than once and was saved by his basic admiration.

At about this time the company bought up patent rights to a foreign invention. I am not going into technicalities because it is unnecessary and it will lead me off the track to do so. The apparatus was incomplete and crude but embraced a splendid basic idea. To Gregg was given the commission of developing and installing the machine which would be of vital importance to the future of the company.

He undertook the job with the enthusiasm of a maiden knight, spurred by the encouragement and friendship of Ardmore. Some fortunate impulse prompted Gregg to point out the need of secrecy in the work and to suggest a secret department of supervision, headed by himself, accountable only to Ardmore. Ardmore received the idea with delight.

It was the consequential office boy theme, hugely magnified. Under his very thumb, Ardmore had not an inflated boy but a grown man whose worship was a constant gratification, a man whose optimism matched his own and whose thoughts were easily molded. In addition was a whole department, cut off from criticism and review by other officials, secret, replete with the most delicious mummery. There were portentous, secret interviews between Ardmore and Gregg, letters marked "Personal and Confidential" flowed back and forth. Draftsmen worked in an isolated nook and were forbidden to converse with each other or outsiders.

There was an air about Gregg's department. Everything was hurried, and imperative, with an occult flavor. Gregg traveled incessantly on the best trains, was always to be seen mysteriously coming or going. Always was the unspoken idea of "Make way for a special officer of the Crown!" Expense was never spared. It pleased both Ardmore and Gregg to say in a twenty-one word telegram what could have been expressed in ten words. And Gregg's expense account used to make the accountants' hair curl.

An unscrupulous man would have run the thing into the ground; Gregg never did. He was a man of absolute integrity within his lights, a right-thinking, church-going member of respectable suburban society. He was not handsome, and he admired the lacking quality where he found it in Ardmore; he was not smart socially and he was not highly cultured, and he found a beau ideal in Ardmore because of his own shortcomings.

Temperamentally, Gregg was not an

engineer; he hadn't the flair for unequivocal truth. But he had worked like a dog to acquire an engineering education, and he wanted to believe himself the thing he longed to be. His optimism and his sense of the dramatic, coupled with average acumen, enabled him to conduct himself as an engineer.

The work progressed under his supervision. I am skipping the years rather indiscriminately; the construction and development work covered some five of them, which were without high points and were unmarked by dramatic events. A trial unit was built at great cost at the Philadelphia plant, was put into operation by men from Gregg's department, each man understanding certain details without having a knowledge of the whole. For a year or more the thing was kept in operation, being constantly rebuilt, altered and improved. Once or twice it blew up; in the history of the complete development of the several units about various parts of the country there were a number of rather ghastly accidents.

In time all the necessary units were put up, more or less standardized as to construction and operation. At the end of five years Gregg was able to point with pride, to show a great dollar saving in the improved type of apparatus over the old crude type of former years. He sat back a little and rested on his laurels. It had been a bitter struggle. There had been times when success seemed far away, when the expenditures had seemed appalling and profligate, when Ardmore had been morose, and discouragement over fire or explosion almost overwhelming.

Now, with the work accomplished, Gregg was ready to sit back with a sigh. There was still much work, but it was administrative and supervisory rather than active. He kept constant record of each unit and worked out capacity and efficiency standards for each. The men Gregg had put in charge remained faithful and loyal, all fired in some way by the little man's tireless enthusiasm. None of the operators was a scientist or engineer;

each had the education derived from association with the apparatus, practical experience. No one in the company had a critical view. Every man who judged the apparatus judged it in comparison with its earlier, primitive form, and, with no background of wide technical knowledge, found it good.

It *was* good. Nothing like it had ever been seen. Next to the primitive devices it replaced, it was as the *Majestic* to the *Mayflower*.

Ardmore was pleased with the result of more than five years' work, incorporating, as it did, many of his dreams. And Gregg was content. The crises and failures were at an end. Now, when there were meetings between all the secret personnel of the big venture, Gregg was acknowledged expert and master. Some of his disciples, trained by him, might put forward ideas for improvements and good ones, but such ideas were relatively small. The thing stood as a whole as a present-day wonder, and he was the *deus ex machina*.

I was a junior engineer, dispatched on a totally different line of work, neither privileged nor competent to review Gregg's masterpiece. Like myself, all the other engineers minded their own affairs, gladly conceded Gregg's eminence. They all liked Gregg for his sociability and naïve nature. I liked him, tremendously. It was many years before I had any suspicion of the truth.

Then Gregg was reassigned to new problems, each one possessing a new importance and a new need for secrecy. The old one became something matter of course, and the strict secrecy that had shrouded it fell away. Gregg was tired, desolately tired, always. With the press of work, and increasing lassitude, he began to let younger men, scrubs with new engineering degrees, take charge.

He no longer made a secret of the plans and design and characteristic data which he had assembled in his note books over five years. He turned over all these figures to his young assistants, fresh from their rigorous courses in

technical schools, and the youngsters delved and tested and analyzed. They questioned Gregg and he answered them, and then they stopped questioning him but talked among themselves.

"How'n the hell does he get that? That curve looks pretty but mathematically there—there ain't no sense to it."

They knew what he had been through. They thought of him keeping Ardmore pacified all these years, of the difficulties that he withstood alone, the uphill fight. It was impertinent and cruel to ask old Gregg questions about thermodynamics when they were sadly aware that his knowledge of the science had long ago slipped from him—before he got through being a draftsman, in fact. And Gregg was a prince. "Let the poor devil alone! They're running him ragged now, and he's all in."

Gregg was all in. He ceased traveling about the country, because after every trip he was ill for a week. He left the field work to able assistants. Then he began coming to the office for part of each day only, enjoying a well-earned rest, and later for only a day or two a week. A conference with Ardmore tired him to the verge of collapse. Always, when I saw him, he was buoyant and full of his old optimism.

"The doctor says it's my teeth," he would say. "I knew it was that all the time. Imagine the scoundrels taking my appendix out, when it was my teeth all the time. Well . . . They'll fix me up hunky dory now that they've finally found out what's really wrong."

And so they monkeyed with his teeth, trying to conceal the fact from the poor devil that he was dying. Dying game, on his feet, but dying just the same.

III

FINALLY the suspicion entered his head that his death was near. He refused the idea; his old sanguine self rebelled at dying before he was forty. But he put his house in order. He was no longer able to come to the office. Un-

willing to admit to himself that he had given up the reins, unwilling perhaps to accept his well-deserved salary for doing no work, he undertook to write a handbook at home. A handbook of all possible information about the task to which he had devoted his life; it was to be a legacy of his genius and energy—if he must leave.

Propped up in bed with a drawing-board before him, he turned out page after page of data in his exquisite lettering, chart after chart in his inimitable draftsmanship. The book was nearly completed when the drawing-board fell from his nerveless hands. He must have been content; he had completed nearly all of the formidable book of information. It would be necessary for those who followed him to retrace very little of the hard road by which Gregg had come by his knowledge.

Gregg's death was genuinely mourned. He had bucked up men when they were tired and discouraged, he had been fair and agreeable and encouraging to youngsters, he had been a good fellow. I remembered him cool and unmoved in the face of disaster. I recalled his slight figure, visiting the night shift in the gruesome hours of the morning—coming to show them he considered the job worth doing, I remembered his optimism. . . .

A decent interval after his death, the fruits of his last labors were presented to the company, a deck of neat notes in loose-leaf book form, between black leather covers. And in due course the

book was turned over for the enlightenment of the younger engineers.

They, these engineers, were a flock of keen young technicians, products of four scathing years—and more—in technical school. They knew their calculus and their thermo, knew it from being God-damned for not knowing it in grimy laboratories. And they reviewed Gregg's book. What were they to say?

A mass, a maze of every conceivable kind of unwarrantable assumption, every kind of false and nonsensical data that Gregg could devise in five years of seeing only what he wanted to see. Beautiful sinuous curves, plotting the relationship of one variable to another—when the relationship was scientifically inconceivable. A virtual history of Ardmores' beetle-headed dreams executed by Gregg, polished to the semblance of actuality and truth by Gregg. It was, in short, a monument to two men, and to two traits of character so elusive and so unguessable that the language gives them no name.

What could the youngsters do? They knew that Gregg's great achievement, accomplished under the patronage of Ardmores in secrecy, built by hope and faith instead of knowledge, was a Gargantuan abortion. An infinitely better piece of apparatus could have been built, without disaster, in half the time, at half the expenditure of hundreds of thousands. But never under Ardmores!



THE color of a woman's stockings reflects more truly the color of her soul than her prayers.



The Green Elephant

By Dashiell Hammett

I
JOE SHUPE stood in the doorway of the square-faced office building—his body tilted slantwise so that one thin shoulder, lodged against the gray stone, helped his crossed legs hold him up—looking without interest into the street.

He had stepped into the vestibule to roll a cigarette out of reach of the boisterous wind that romped along Riverside avenue, and he had remained there because he had nothing better to do. In fact, he had nothing else to do just now. Tomorrow he would revisit the employment offices—a matter of a few blocks' walk along Main and Trent avenues, with brief digressions into one or two of the intersecting streets—for the fifth consecutive day; perhaps to be rewarded by a job, perhaps to hear reiterations of the now familiar "nothing in your line today." But the time for that next pilgrimage to the shrines of Industry, through which he might reach the comparative paradise of employment, was still some twenty hours away; so Joe Shupe loitered in the doorway, and dull thoughts began to crawl around in his little round head.

He thought of the Swede first, with distaste. The Swede—he was a Dane, but the distinction was too subtle for Joe—had come down to the city from a Lost Creek lumber camp with money in his pockets and faith in his fellows. When the men came together and formed their brief friendship only fifty dollars remained of the Swede's tangible wealth. Joe got that by a crude and hoary subterfuge with which even a timber-beast from Lost Creek should

have been familiar. What became of the swindled Swede's faith is not a matter of record. Joe had not given *that* a thought; and had his attention been called to it he probably would have been unable to see in it anything but further evidence of the Swede's unfitness for the possession of money.

But what was vital to Joe Shupe was that, inspired by the ease with which he had gained the fifty dollars, he had deserted the polished counter over which for eight hours each day he had shoved pies and sandwiches and coffee, and had set out to live by his wits. But the fifty dollars had soon dribbled away, the Swede had had no successors; and now Joe Shupe was beset with the necessity of finding employment again.

Joe's fault, as Doc Haire had once pointed out, was that he was an unskilled laborer in the world of crime, and therefore had to content himself with stealing whatever came to hand—a slipshod and generally unsatisfactory method. As the same authority had often declared: "Making a living on the mace ain't duck soup! Take half these guys you hear telling the world what wonders they are at puffing boxes, knocking over joints, and the rest of the lays—not a half of 'em makes three meals a day at it! Then what chance has a guy that ain't got no regular racket, but's got to trust to luck, got? Huh?"

But Joe Shupe had disregarded this advice, and even the oracle's own example. For Doc Haire, although priding himself upon being the most altogether efficient house-burglar in the Northwest, was not above shipping out

into the Couer d'Alenes now and then to repair his finances by a few weeks' work in the mines. Joe realized that Doc had been right; that he himself was not equipped to dig through the protecting surfaces with which mankind armored its wealth; that the Swede's advent had been a fortuitous episode, and a recurrence could not be expected. He blamed the Swede now. . . .

A commotion in the street interrupted Joe Shupe's unaccustomed introspection.

Across the street two automobiles were twisting and turning, backing and halting, in clumsy dance figures. Men began to run back and forth between them. A tall man in a black overcoat stood up in one of the cars and began shooting with a small-caliber pistol at indeterminate targets. Weapons appeared in the other automobiles, and in the hands of men in the street between the two machines. Spectators scrambled into doorways. From down the street a policeman was running heavily, tugging at his hip, and trying to free his wrist from an entangling coat-tail. A man was running across the street toward Joe's doorway, a black gladstone bag swinging at his side. As the man's foot touched the curb he fell forward, sprawling half in the gutter half on the sidewalk. The bag left his hand and slid across the pavement—balancing itself as nicely as a boy on skates—to Joe's feet.

The wisdom of Doc Haire went for nothing. With no thought, for the economics of thievery, the amenities of specialization, Joe Shupe followed his bent. He picked up the bag, passed through the revolving door into the lobby of the building, turned a corner, followed a corridor, and at length came to a smaller door, through which he reached an alley. The alley gave to another street and a street-car that had paused to avoid a truck. Joe climbed into the car and found a seat.

Thus far Joe Shupe had been guided by pure instinct, and—granting that to touch the bag at all were judicious—had acted deftly and with beautiful

precision. But now his conscious brain caught up with him as it were, and resumed its dominion over him. He began to wonder what he had let himself in for, whether his prize were worth the risk its possession had entailed, just how great that risk might be. He became excited, his pulse throbbed, singing in his temples, and his mouth went dry. He had a vision of innumerable policemen, packed in taxicabs like pullets in crates, racing dizzily to intercept him.

He got to the street four blocks from where he had boarded the street car, and only a suspicion that the conductor was watching him persuaded him to cling to the bag. He would have preferred leaving it inconspicuously between the seats, to be found in the car barn. He walked rapidly away from the car line, turning thankfully each corner the city put in his path, until he came to another row of car tracks. He stayed on the second car for six blocks, and then wound circuitously through the streets again, finally coming to the hotel in which he had his room.

A towel covering the keyhole, the blind down over the one narrow window, Joe Shupe put the bag on his bed and set about opening it. It was securely locked, but with his knife he attacked a leather side, making a ragged slit through which he looked into depths of green paper.

"Holy hell!" his gaping mouth exclaimed. "All the money in the world!"

II

HE straightened abruptly, listening, while his small brown eyes looked suspiciously around the room. Tiptoeing to the door, he listened again; unlocked the door quickly and flung it open; searched the dark hall. Then he returned to the black bag. Enlarging the opening, he dumped and raked his spoils out on the bed: a mound of grey-green paper—a bushel of it—neatly divided into little soft, paper-gartered bricks. Thousands, hundreds, tens, twenties, fifties! For a long minute he stood open-mouthed, spellbound, pant-

ing; then he hastily covered the pile of currency with one of the shabby grey blankets on the bed, and dropped weakly down beside it.

Presently the desire to know the amount of his loot penetrated Joe's stupefaction and he set about counting the money. He counted slowly and with difficulty, taking one package of bills out of its hiding place at a time and stowing it under another blanket when he had finished with it. He counted each package he handled, bill by bill, ignoring the figures printed on the manilla wrappers. At fifty thousand he stopped, estimating that he had handled one-third of the pile. The emotional seething within him, together with the effort the unaccustomed addition required of his brain, had by then driven his curiosity away.

His mind, freed of its mathematical burden, was attacked by an alarming thought. The manager of the hotel, who was his own clerk, had seen Joe come in with the bag; and while the bag was not unusual in appearance, nevertheless, any black bag would attract both eyes and speculation after the evening papers were read. Joe decided that he would have to get out of the hotel, after which the bag would have to be disposed of.

Laboriously, and at the cost of two large blisters, he hacked at the bag with his dull knife and bent it until, wrapped in an old newspaper, it made a small and unassuming bundle. Then he distributed the money about his person, stuffing his pockets and even putting some of the bills inside his shirt. He looked at his reflection in the mirror when he had finished, and the result was very unsatisfactory: he presented a decidedly and humorously padded appearance.

That would not do. He dragged his battered valise from under the bed and put the money into it, under his few clothes.

There was no delay about his departure from the hotel: it was of the type where all bills are payable in advance. He passed four rubbish cans before he

could summon the courage to get rid of the fragments of the bag, but he boldly dropped them into the fifth; after which he walked—almost scuttled—for ten minutes, turning corners and slipping through alleys, until he was positive he was not being watched.

At a hotel across the city from his last home he secured a room and went up to it immediately. Behind drawn blinds, masked keyhole, and closed transom, he took the money out again. He had intended finishing his counting—the flight across the city having rekindled his desire to know the extent of his wealth—but when he found that he had bunched it, had put already counted with uncounted, and thought of the immensity of the task, he gave it up. Counting was a "tough job," and the afternoon papers would tell him how much he had.

He wanted to look at the money, to feast his eyes upon it, to caress his fingers with it, but its abundance made him uneasy, frightened him even, notwithstanding that it was safe here from prying eyes. There was too much of it. It unnerved him. A thousand dollars, or perhaps even ten thousand, would have filled him with wild joy, but this bale. . . . Furtively, he put it back in the valise.

For the first time now he thought of it not as money,—a thing in itself,—but as money—potential fomen, cards, liquor, idleness, everything! It took his breath for the instant—the thought of the things the world held for him now! And he realized that he was wasting time, that these things were abroad, beckoning, while he stood in his room dreaming of them. He opened the valise and took out a double handful of the bills, cramming them into his pockets.

On the steps descending from the office to the street he halted abruptly. A hotel of this sort—or any other—was certainly no place to leave a hundred and fifty thousand dollars unguarded. A fine chump he would be to leave it behind and have it stolen!

He hurried back to his room and,

scarcely pausing to renew his former precautions, sprang to the valise. The money was still there. Then he sat down and tried to think of some way by which the money could be protected during his absence. He was hungry—he had not eaten since morning—but he could not leave the money. He found a piece of heavy paper, wrapped the money in it and lashed it securely, making a large but inconspicuous bundle—laundry, perhaps.

On the street newsboys were shouting extras. Joe bought a paper, folded it carefully so that its headlines were out of sight, and went to a restaurant on First avenue. He sat at a table back in one corner, with his bundle on the floor and his feet on the bundle. Then with elaborate nonchalance he spread the paper before him and read of the daylight hold-up in which \$250,000 had been taken from an automobile belonging to the Fourth National Bank. \$250,000! He grabbed the bundle from the floor, knocking his forehead noisily against the table in his haste, and put it in his lap. Then he reddened with swift self-consciousness, paled apprehensively, and yawned exaggeratedly. After assuring himself that none of the other men in the restaurant had noted his peculiar behavior, he turned his attention to the newspaper again, and read the story of the robbery.

Five of the bandits had been caught in the very act, the paper said, and two of them were seriously wounded. The bandits, who, according to the paper, must have had information concerning the unusually large shipment from some friend on the inside, had bungled their approach, bringing their own automobile to rest too far from their victim's for the greatest efficiency. Nevertheless, the sixth bandit had made away with the money. As was to be expected, the bandits denied that there was a sixth, but the disappearance of the money testified irrefragably to his existence.

From the restaurant Joe went to a saloon on Howard street, bought two bottles of white liquor, and took them

to his room. He had decided that he would have to remain indoors that night: he couldn't walk around with \$250,000 under his arm. Suppose some flaw in the paper should suddenly succumb to the strain upon it? Or he should drop the bundle? Or someone should bump heavily into it?

He fidgeted about the room for hours, pondering his problem with all the concentration of which his dull mind was capable. He opened one of the bottles that he had brought, but he set it aside untasted: he could not risk drinking until he had safeguarded the money. It was too great a responsibility to be mixed with alcohol. The temptations of women and cards and the rest did not bother him now; time enough for them when the money was safe. He couldn't leave the money in his room, and he couldn't carry it to any of the places he knew, or to any place at all, for that matter.

III

He slept little that night, and by morning had made no headway against his problem. He thought of banking the money, but dismissed the thought as absurd: he couldn't walk into a bank a day or so after a widely advertised robbery and open an account with a bale of currency. He even thought of finding some secluded spot where he could bury it; but that seemed still more ridiculous. A few shovels of dirt was not sufficient protection. He might buy or rent a house and conceal the money on his own premises; but there were fires to consider, and what might serve as a hiding place for a few hundred dollars wouldn't do for many thousand: he must have an absolutely safe plan, one that would be safe in every respect and would admit of no possible loophole through which the money could vanish. He knew half a dozen men who could have told him what to do; but which of them could he trust where \$250,000 was concerned?

When he was giddy from too much smoking on an empty stomach, he

packed his valise again and left the hotel. A day of uneasiness and restlessness, with the valise ever in his hand or under his foot, brought no counsel. The grey-green incubus that his battered bag housed benumbed him, handicapped by his never-agile imagination. His nerves began to send little fluttering messages—forerunners of panic—to his brain.

Leaving a restaurant that evening he encountered Doc Haire himself.

"Hullo, Joe! Going away?"

Joe looked down at the valise in his hand.

"Yes," he said.

That was it! Why hadn't he thought of it before! In another city, at some distance from the scene of the robbery, none of the restrictions that oppressed him in Spokane would be present. Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, the East!

Although he had paid for a berth, Joe Shupe did not occupy it; but sat all night in a day couch. At the last moment he had realized that the ways of sleeping-cars were unknown to him—perhaps one was required to surrender one's hand baggage. Joe did not know, but he did know that the money in his valise was not going to leave his hands until he had found a securer place for it. So he dozed uncomfortably through the ride over the Cascades, sprawled over two seats in the smoking-car, leaning against the valise.

In Seattle he gained no more liberty than he had had in Spokane. He had purposed to open an account with each bank in the city, distributing his wealth widely in cautious amounts; and for two days he tried to carry out his plan. But his nervous legs simply would not carry him through the door of a bank. There was something too austere, too official, too all-knowing, about the very architecture of these financial institutions, and there was no telling what complications, what questioning, awaited a man inside.

A fear of being bereft of his wealth by more cunning thieves—and he admitted frankly now that there might be

many such—began to obsess him, and kept him out of dance-hall, pool-room, gambling-house, and saloon. From anyone who addressed even the most casual of sentences to him he fled headlong. On his first day in Seattle he bought a complete equipment of bright and gaudy clothes, but he wore them for only half an hour. He felt that they gave him an altogether too affluent appearance, and would certainly attract the attention of thieves in droves; so he put them away in his valise, and thereafter wore his old clothes.

At night now he slept with the valise in bed beside him, one of his arms bent over it in a protecting embrace that was not unlike a bridegroom's, waking now and then with the fear that someone was tugging at it. And every night it was a different hotel. He changed his lodgings each day, afraid of the curiosity his habit of always carrying the valise might arouse if he stayed too long in any one hotel.

Such intelligence as he was ordinarily in possession of was by this time completely submerged beneath the panic in which he lived. He went aimlessly about the city, a shabby man with the look of a harried rabbit in his furtive eyes, destinationless, without purpose, filled with forebodings that were now powerless except to deepen the torpor in his head.

A senseless routine filled his days. At eight or eight-thirty in the morning he would leave the hotel where he had slept, eat his breakfast at a nearby lunch-room, and then walk—down Second to Yessler Way, to Fourth, to Pike—or perhaps as far as Stewart—to Second, to Yessler Way, to Fourth. . . . Sometimes he would desert his beat to sit for an hour or more on one of the green iron benches around the totem in Pioneer Square, staring vacantly at the street, his valise either at his side or beneath his feet. Presently, goaded by an obscure disquietude, he would get up abruptly and go back to his promenade along Yessler Way to Fourth, to Pike, to Second, to Yessler Way, to . . . When he thought of food he ate meagerly at the nearest res-

taurant, but often he forgot to eat all day.

His nights were more vivid; with darkness his brain shook off some of its numbness and become sensitive to pain. Lying in the dark, always in a strange room, he would be filled with wild fears whose anarchic chaos amounted to delirium. Only in his dreams did he see things clearly. His brief and widely spaced naps brought him distinct, sharply etched pictures in which invariably he was robbed of his money, usually to the accompaniment of physical violence in its most unlovely forms.

The end was inevitable. In a larger city Joe Shupe might have gone on until his mentality had wasted away entirely and he collapsed. But Seattle is not large enough to smother the identities of its inhabitants: strangers' faces become familiar: one becomes accustomed to meeting the man in the brown derby somewhere in the vicinity of the post-office, and the red-haired girl with the grapes on her hat somewhere along Pine Street between noon and one o'clock; and looks for the slim youth with the remarkable moustache, expecting to pass him on the street at least twice during the course of the day. And so it was that two Prohibition enforcement officers came to recognize Joe Shupe and his battered valise and his air of dazed fear.

They didn't take him very seriously at first, until, quite by accident, they grew aware of his custom of changing

his address each night. Then one day, when they had nothing special on hand and when the memory of reprimands they had received from their superiors for not frequently enough "showing results" was fresh, they met Joe on the street. For two hours they shadowed him—up Fourth to Pike, to Second, to Yessler Way. . . . On the third round-trip confusion and chagrin sent the officers to accost Joe.

"I ain't done nothing!" Joe told them, hugging the valise to his wasted body with both arms. "You leave me be!"

One of the officers said something that Joe did not understand—he was beyond comprehending anything by now—but tears came from his red-rimmed eyes and ran down the hollows of his cheeks.

"You leave me be!" he repeated.

Then, still clasping the valise to his bosom, he turned and ran down the street. The officers easily overtook him.

Joe Shupe's story of how he had come into possession of the stolen quarter-million was received by everyone—police, press and public—with a great deal of merriment. But, now that the responsibility for the money's safety rested with the Seattle police, he slept soundly that night, as well as those that followed; and when he appeared in the courtroom in Spokane two weeks later, to plead futilely that he was not one of the men who had held up the Fourth National Bank's automobile, he was his normal self again, both physically and mentally.



PERSISTENCY is the chief characteristic of most courtships. Likewise is it the chief cause of the disruption of most courtships.



MARRIAGE is love's fleeting moment petrified.



Joe Moore and Callie Blasingame

By Sara Haardt

I

JOE MOORE and Callie Blasingame were in high spirits when they left the house. It was full night and a little breeze had worked mysteriously through the throaty heat until the air was charged with a kind of electric thrill. It was a night for doing things such as hits towns of the Southern prairies about once a midsummer.

Montgomery, of course, was really a city. At night, when all the show windows were lighted up, it sparkled like a gaudy badge, and there were two skyscrapers in the downtown district that ogled seductive office bulbs behind sign-painted windows. The Union Station, straddling the Alabama River at a sullen curve, boasted four Eastern through trains a day. The trains stopped long enough for the passengers to stroll up and down the wooden platform while the engine picked up a dining-car and dropped a Jim Crow coach from Atlanta.

From the hub of the station, like the spokes of a wheel radiated the streets of Montgomery. They were broad and brick-paved except in the suburbs, where asphalt had more recently come into vogue, and in the uptown districts they were lined with shaggy rows of trees. Here were lawns, too, and homes with lobby-wide verandas, and occasionally a tiny nucleus of stores grouped about a gasoline station.

There was a negro district called Boguehomme that careened into a stinking drain carrying dirty wash water, sewage, and the worst of garbage the full length of three miles. The streets

were of bare dirt, hedged with board shanties and rickety, sign-plastered, odd stores. Everything smelled. On wash days, Mondays and Tuesdays, the fences and yards were littered with drying wash and on these days ladies from uptown rode through Boguehomme in their cars in search of delinquent laundrywomen or a girl to "do" an extra bundle of clothes. This was toward the south.

To the southwest rambled a half-tumbled section of town known as West End. It was cut by railroad yards and quartered by cotton mills into jagged areas of unkempt yard-fronts and refuse dumps. Here the mill hands—the white trash—lived. Respectable people did not ride through the neighborhood after dark. Brickbats and decayed missiles from the freight cars on the sidings were hurled at the passing automobiles of outsiders. West Enders, from time immemorial, had resented uptowners butting in.

Between West End and the best part of town was pegged a ratty, two-story section of weather-cracked dwellings that was spoken of as a "fairly good neighborhood." The houses, monotonous and run-down, were poorly kept. It was a neighborhood of few servants. Every morning, before the sun waxed hot, the women appeared along the blocks in boudoir caps and faded gingham and swept the porches and sidewalks. As the day heightened and the squawking vegetable wagons straggled through the streets, they congregated in knots, haggling with the hucksters, pawing the vegetables, measuring them, and at last loading them in the ham-

mocked apron-fronts of their gingham. At noon-time the men returned from work for dinner. Their coming livened the stagnant streets with raucous callings,—“don’ts” and hallos to the children, and muffled shouts to the women in the back.

Dinner was a silent, heavy meal. The men were tired and grumpy, speaking only when they wanted something on the table. The women were bleary-eyed and fretted pale with the heat. There was nothing to talk about. The men never spoke of business. When they had finished eating they got up from the table, washed their sticky hands in the bathroom, and went out again.

After they had gone the women pulled off their top garments and lay down for the rest of the afternoon. Sometimes they would get up early, dress, and go over and sit on each other’s porches or walk downtown. But usually they did not begin to dress until sun-down. Directly the men came home they put supper on the table and when this was over there was nothing to do but sit on the porch or walk to the nearby drug store or movie house until it was time for bed.

Married couples sometimes got together for an evening of cards. The older men and women drowsed and stretched on the steps and verandas, and eventually turned in. The young people kept their dates in the yard-swings and on the porches behind the vines. They were nearly always home from the movies by ten o’clock and their voices streaked across the night in bright, hard gushes of laughter and soft, cuddley, humming sounds.

At twelve o’clock the laughter stopped and the little sounds faded out. A druggy stillness seemed to press the air close to the earth. Windows yawned wide, waiting for a breeze.

This was the neighborhood that skirted the big houses and lawns of the best part of town. It was where Joe Moore and Callie Blasingame had lived all their lives.

II

JOE and Callie had lived across the

street from each other ever since they had been in the second grade grammar school. Joe had always loved Callie. He had “looked after” her ever since she was a little girl, and now that she had grown up he liked to take her to places and be seen with her when there were a lot of people around.

Callie was not pretty and her features were not regular, but she knew how to wear her clothes, and she was one of the few girls in the neighborhood who did not have to work. This gave her quite an air. Her father was master mechanic at the L. and N. shops and he made enough to give his wife and daughter almost anything they wanted.

But Mrs. Blasingame was not the kind of woman who put everything she had on her back. She had simple tastes. She believed in “living comfortable enough and letting the young folks have the good time.” So she was perfectly willing for Callie to buy pretty things and have herself taken care of at the beauty parlors, and to run around with her crowd of young people, even though it cost a lot of money. Callie was her only child, so she was entitled to everything that her parents could afford to give her.

Callie knew only too well that her parents liked to do for her. They were proud of her pretty clothes, even though they didn’t always approve of them; they talked about her good times with other mothers and fathers when down in their hearts they were a little afraid of “the way young people were going on nowadays.” Callie had told her parents many a time that she didn’t expect to marry and settle down for the rest of her days as they had done. “I’m going to kick out a few lights,” she would say, “and then—well—I don’t know what I’m going to do, but it’s going to be something different. It’s going to have a kick in it.”

Callie had made up her mind long ago that she wouldn’t marry anybody from her own crowd or anybody that she had ever known anything about before. She didn’t see how people could marry when they had known each other all their

lives. None of the boys in her own crowd had ever interested her. It was true she gave them dates and ran around with them but it was just to keep from losing out and because they might be the means of her meeting other "new" men.

Callie knew well enough that a girl in her class would have to pick her man and go after him hard. Men in the upper social strata of Montgomery, men who were seen at the Country Club and the University Club, did not pay their addresses to girls in Callie's neighborhood. They might take them out to ride on corn jags or sneak them on moonlight swimming parties, but they didn't ask them for "regular engagements." They didn't marry them.

Callie had seen some things. She had known several girls in her own crowd who had gone out on parties and "late dates." The society men called them "good sports." For a while, with each one successively, Callie had been jealous until she saw that they weren't getting anywhere. After they had been on several wild parties they were dropped. It had all touched Callie and taught her a lesson. She figured that being what her mother and father termed fast would not win her permanent popularity or be the instrument of her getting a husband.

Callie was fundamentally straight. She hated cheap passion. It was true that she loved a good time, and wanted to be popular in a spectacular way, but she knew how far to go. She didn't ever want to cheapen herself. She wouldn't run after a man or let him take liberties with her just for the sake of getting places.

"Look here," she always told them, "how far do you think you can ride on a chocolate milk? I didn't know it was your birthday and, anyway, I'm not puttin' out."

In spite of her unwillingness in this department and her sharp tongue, Callie was good company on a party. She could laugh at rough jokes and nothing that anybody else ever did shocked her. She often saw her girl friends doing

fast things—she didn't ride around with them all night for nothing. Callie herself would drink enough to feel good; she didn't mind an occasional kiss when everybody was pepped up, but she wouldn't go off in the dark or a lonely place with a man by herself. It just wasn't in her.

Another thing—Callie had a little old-fashioned dream something like this: it was that she must be pure and good for the real lover that she was going to meet some day. He would want her to be the sweetest girl in the world. He would want her to be good,—straight. Callie dreamed that his love for her would tell him all these things. And some day, she felt confidently, she would meet him—and then—

III

IN her years of running around Callie had always regarded Joe Moore as a kind of boring "steady." She gave him engagements every now and then just to keep him on the string and when she thought she couldn't get places any other way. Joe was a nice, sensible boy. He did not have a "line" like the other boys that Callie knew, but he talked about business and the office in a manner that was very flattering. Joe was a clerk in a wholesale shoe house. Some day he was going to be a buyer and eventually a district manager. There was money in the shoe business. "There's no use talking," he would say, "you can't keep a good man down. Why—with this business in another year—"

Of course, Callie wasn't interested in all the details of the shoe business, but she was pleased at Joe's discussing them with her. It showed that he thought she was smart, that she could appreciate things that other women couldn't begin to understand. She was sure that her father had never discussed his business affairs with her mother, and no other man had wanted to explain anything to her or speak of business matters except as an excuse to get out of doing something that he didn't want to do.

Callie got so after a while that she would ask Joe questions that brought on long discussions and, without knowing it, she came to express her own opinions about her personal feelings and beliefs. "I know one thing sure," she would say, "a man should not keep any of his business affairs from his wife, and if I have anything to say about it my husband is going to tell me everything from a to izzard. It's the only way for people to really understand each other. More unhappy marriages—"

"I think you're absolutely right," Joe would nod. "More unhappy marriages have been caused by just not knowing—just not knowing each other! A woman's got to share everything—business worries and secrets—as well as the—other things. You've got the right idea about it. You understand."

"Well, it's just this—" Callie said. "The man I'm going to marry—"

"Now, don't you worry," Joe would soothe, "you darling—you. Any man would—for you."

Callie thought that it was sweet in Joe to feel like this. He was so generous, so good. He was in love with her, he wanted her for himself, and yet the only thing that really mattered to him was her happiness. He just wanted her to be happy with the man she married. They had often talked about it. Joe said that he had never met a man who was good enough for Callie.

"I haven't seen anybody living who was cut out big enough for you," he told her. "He's got to have plenty of money and ability and I reckon you'd say—*belong*—Oh, he'd have to be an all-round, *regular* man to be even worth your little finger."

"You're an old dear for saying things like that, Joe. You almost make me believe them myself. And it does help so to have you look at it that way. But I don't know—sometimes I wonder—it doesn't look like I'm ever going to meet anybody."

Joe took her hand and patted it. "You're such a darling," he said softly, "I wish I could make you happy. I

wish I knew the right man to introduce to you. But don't you worry about it any more. We'll find him some day."

Callie let her hand stay in his. It was sort of nice to be with Joe. He was so gentle and thoughtful and he didn't have to be entertained and cajoled like other men. Callie had grown awfully tired of laughing and joking—"kicking up" on dates with men—pretending to have a wonderful time when she was really bored to death. She didn't have to do any of this with Joe. He wasn't interested in anyone save her, he didn't care how many "knock-outs" came out in the younger crowd every year, he didn't make up to pretty, fast girls with whom he might have had a good time. Callie couldn't help like Joe for liking her so much. Her heart fluttered a little at the thought of his caring about her for so long and in the same dear, serious way. Members of the crowd joked about it—teased Joe—but Callie liked it. She was glad Joe loved her, though it made her sorry for him when she remembered that she could never love him. She took a certain pleasure and pride in being loved, even if she couldn't return it. It made her strangely independent with other men and sweet and considerate of Joe. After all, he wasn't half as unattractive as a lot of men she had known.

IV

BUT, suddenly, Callie realized that she was getting old. She was one of the "older girls" now—twenty-four—and in another year or two the younger boys would stop going with her. Then there would be nothing to do but give an occasional date to the few traveling men who boarded in the neighborhood and fool around with some of the very young "jellies" who thought it was smart to rush one of the older girls. Joe still loved her but, then, she couldn't expect him to stay in love with her always. He would be marrying some day.

Things were at this standstill when something very unexpected happened. Callie had given Joe a date for the night

of the fifteenth of June. It was a Friday night and Callie knew that Joe would come at a quarter to eight and that they would walk down town and get a drink and wind up at the picture show. Then, after the picture, they would get another drink and walk home and Joe would sit on the porch or in the swing until eleven-thirty. Callie could have plotted every step they were going to take and phonographed every word they were going to say. It had all happened so many times.

But just before supper-time Joe called her over the telephone. His voice sounded a bit shaky and queer and Callie suspected that he had been drinking. Joe always tried to get with her, talk with her, when he had had a drink or two.

"Is that you—Callie?"

"Yes—of course—who did you think it was?"

"I knew—the minute you spoke—You don't think I'd forget your voice—"

"I don't know—you never can tell—"

"*You* can. I wanted to tell you about tonight—"

"Tonight—"

"I've framed a party. You've heard me speak of Freddie Colston—the boss's nephew connected with the firm in Atlanta?"

"The one who has an interest in the business?"

"Yep—the very one. Well—he breezed by in his twin-six coupla hours ago and is rearing to throw a party. So—we got it all set. He wants a date with you—he knows about you—"

"Why—Joe—how in the world could he know me? Why, he's never—"

"Oh, but he's heard enough about you—leave it to me—I got him told—"

"Why, the idea—!"

"Now—didn't I tell you? Freddie's a prince of a fellow. Everything's going to come out all right—just like I said—He can't help but fall for you—you dear—you!"

Joe's voice sounded low and hurt to Callie. Poor Joe! How fine and good he really was. Callie couldn't help feel sorry for him.

S. S.—Oct.—8

The night was suddenly sweet, mysterious. Callie was thrilled. She went into her stuffy little bedroom and started to dress. There were tears of excitement in her eyes. A charming pink dyed her cheeks. She sang a lot of songs together as she put her hair up, and tore it down, and put it up again. She put on a dress that laughed silver and gold in the light.

Joe came at eight o'clock. As they left the house Callie thought that somehow the night had a sweep to it. A little breeze whispered through the air as caressing as a feather. People hurried along the streets as though the wind were pushing them. It was a wonderful night for an adventure.

"Let's do something different," said Callie, "I've got an edge on. Let's *do* something."

Joe smiled down at her a trifle sadly. "All right. You bet, I reckon Freddie's got some kind of a bun on. They're going to meet us at the United Corner at eight-thirty. But you know Dotty Parks. She's got to be some late if it's just to show the boss that she doesn't give a damn. Freddie's got her down though. She's been taking care of all the correspondence from his branch. Darn good stenographer."

Callie powdered her nose again in the cigar-store mirror. Joe watched her, his eyes growing tender, as though he could have taken her in his arms. Callie fidgeted. She was eager to get away before her toilet lost any of its freshness.

"There they are!" Joe took her arm. "Isn't that twin-six the berries?"

Callie sauntered leisurely, gracefully onto the sidewalk and over to the door of the car. Dotty Parks had jumped out and Joe helped her into the front seat. A fairly nice-looking man with lazy, brown eyes was curled up under the wheel. He leaned forward ever so slightly to shake hands with Callie. "Glad to meet you," he murmured, and as the car started off—"all set?"

They were strangely silent as the downtown blocks sped by. Callie could not speak for the wonder of it. A

numbing paralysis had seized her tongue. Dotty Parks giggled something and Freddie Colston called, "Where to? Anybody give a damn?"

Callie nodded up at him and smiled. She edged over closer to him and dropped her hand down on the seat between them. She hesitated a moment, as though she were waiting intensely for him to say something, then: "Let's do something different tonight," she said softly, "something to make it a real night. I'll want to remember it—always—"

Freddie Colston looked at her. He put up his arm and slid it along the back of the seat until his hand lay against her shoulder. "All right," he whispered, "anything you say. I strive to please."

"Mm-m-m-m-uh!" tirrahed Dotty Parks, "don't you two birds get so interested in each other that you forget where you're going. I don't want to wake up clasping a lily. Do we, Joey?"

Freddie snorted. "That's where I shine. This is a knowin' car, little one. I've got her trained till she's a driver itself. You just wait."

He slouched down on the cushions and pulled Callie closer. His arm had dropped around her waist and Callie moved so that she could rest her head on his shoulder. The posture wasn't comfortable, for he was continually jerking in order to keep the car in the road, but she enjoyed the thrill of his "courting" her like this before everybody.

"Where do we go from here?" Joe called from the back. "I tell you. Let's ride through Boguehomme to West End. The hard boys are having some kind of a street fair out there and they say there's a bunch of niggers on the mid-way that can play the blues."

"Let's do," chimed Dotty Parks. "I think it'd be fun. Just oodles of fun. I adore real niggers singin' the blues."

"Just as you say," drawled Freddie Colston. "We'll catch a little ozone first." He headed the car for the dimly-lighted streets just outside the city limits.

Dotty Parks giggled. "I know a grand

place to park, Freddie," she said. "It's around the next curve and off the road a little piece. Nobody ever bothers you."

They had left the asphalt now. The road was dark except for the sheet of brightness from the head-lights. Freddie turned off the engine and dimmed all of the lights but the little red globe on the back. Then, he took Callie in his arms and kissed her. He crushed her so tightly that it took her breath away and mussed her hair and he laughed when she struggled a little and tried to brush it out of her eyes.

Callie trembled with a big, strange fear. She felt as if something hot and sticky were smothering her and she had to fight it. "Oh, no—no—don't—don't—do that—"

He slackened his hold of her for an instant. "What's the matter," he choked, "do you have those often?"

"I—I can't breathe—it's hot—it's so awfully hot here—can't we go—I've got to have a little air—it's silly, I know—but—"

Freddie straightened up with a hard laugh. "God's sake!" he muttered. "Well—hey—back there! Are you two eggs ready to shake it on? You been mighty quiet all this time. Better look out, Joey. That little lady has got lovin' ways."

The car purred smoothly through a cloud of cool air, Callie straightened her hair and took a flat, gold vanity case from the V-front of her dress and powdered her nose. She felt better as the air bathed her.

"Let's get some hot dogs and eat 'em on the way to the fair," she cried gaily. "They've got an awful kick. And I want a dope lime!"

As the car swerved past a street lamp she turned around and looked at Joe and Dotty Parks. They had been awfully quiet back there. She thought Joe's collar looked bedraggled and Dotty was brushing the powder off his coat with a quite proprietary air.

"Don't you all want some hot dogs?" she asked, flutteringly. Her voice dropped into a suspiciously low key in spite of her efforts to keep it up.

"I tell you what I want," sang Dotty Parks. "I want Joey to take me on the Ferris wheel. I'm going to ride on it till I'm cuckoo drunk. It's a good thing I've got him to take care of me."

"Sure I'll ride you on the Ferris wheel," answered Joe. "Anything you want." He smiled at Callie. "We'll all ride on the Ferris wheel."

Callie turned around again. Freddie Colston had put his arm back of the seat and she cuddled down so that her head rested against his shoulder. He kissed her, and laughed, "I say—if you're not the funniest woman I ever saw."

V

WHEN they rode into the brightly lighted streets Callie talked and laughed prettily but she was sick at heart. The thought of mixing with the rowdy gang of people at the fair and riding on the Ferris wheel frightened her. She had always been deathly afraid of the sensation of looking down from a giddy height. It filled her with a wild, terrible weakness that acted on her like a pained excitement. It made her silly, hysterical.

Dotty Parks caught Joe's arm as they left the car. "Come on—now—it's up the stairs to paradise—I'm dying for an honest-to-goodness scarey thrill. Is everybody game?"

Callie dropped her eyes and appeared to be fixing the catch of her wrist-watch. "I'm a little skittish of those things," she said stiffly. "I've heard of 'em stopping and the people having to climb out on fire-engine ladders. It would be terrible if—"

"Aw nuts—say, what kind of a berry are you—gummin' the party? You can't quit on us like that—not and me knowing it—" Freddie Colston was pushing her through the crowd. "You haven't got cold feet, have you?"

Callie smiled, and hated him. The popping noises of the machinery and the gloating voices pierced her through. As she stepped into the tippy car on the platform a gust of wind ruffled her hair and blew her skirts about her body. A

roar of animal sound went up from the crowd. She set her face away. Gritty tears formed under her eyelids and the myriad lights jumping about her seemed to sweat a close, terrible heat.

The sudden movement of the wheel made her start violently. Freddie had circled her with his arm and as they spun round she was pinned against his shoulder with a cramping pressure. She was deaf to the noises now. She put her hands up to her temples and shrieked with laughter.

"What—in hell?"

"They've stopped—they've stopped—don't you see—we're not moving—we've stopped—"

"God's sake—shut up! S'pose it has—can I help it? You don't think—"

"You made me come! I wouldn't have come if it hadn't been for you—you know it—"

"Looka here—you hush all this racket! You don't think I cared whether you came or not—do you? Listen, you dumbbell. We haven't stopped—they're just letting some passengers on. Now—will you—shut up!"

VI

IN the car going home Callie suffered the last stage of her hysterics. Freddie Colston had helped her into the back seat. "God's sake, Joe," he mumbled, "take care of this woman. Shes' almost run me nuts."

And Joe had put his arm back of her head, ever so gently, while Callie cried and cried to her heart's content. "You darling, you darling!" he whispered, his voice soft, "I'm so sorry—so sorry. Now—now—you'll be all right in a minute. You'll feel better after a good cry. After this—"

Callie turned away from him, sobbing as brokenly as a child racked with pain. From Joe came the softest murmur: "Poor little girl! Why—you mustn't cry like that—crying your precious eyes out—" He was puzzled. He had liked comforting Callie, he had thrilled to her giving in to him, her caresses, but he wanted her to stop crying. "Now you

tell me what's the matter," he said, failing utterly to make his voice stern. And, yet, it sounded strangely new and big. His gladness gave him a rich, masterful strength.

"It isn't that," sobbed Callie blissfully, "it's because—you're so good—so wonderful—that I can't—ever—be worthy—of you—"

Blasingame announced her engagement to Joe Moore. And the marriage has really been a success, as marriages go. Callie and Joe live in the same block that they have lived in all their lives, but Callie has already said that as soon as Joe gets another raise they are going to move into a better neighborhood.

"I think this neighborhood is going down," she says, "and I owe it to Joe to move if it will be for the best. You know—Joe's always been the ambitious member of this family—"

VII

NOBODY was surprised when Callie



October Swimming-Pool

By A. Newberry Choyce

POOL under the trees
Let your lover swim
For the last time
Round your velvet rim.

Before Winter bangs
Your bright glassy door,
And leaves you all locked
From still shore to shore.

For what shall I do
When the long night comes,
But sit by my fire
And twirl two thumbs?

My fire that soaks me
Through and through,
And parches me up. . . .
What shall I do

But sit there and doze
And dream and start,
Feeling your fountain
In my heart?



Hagopian's Homecoming

By Paul Tanaquil

I

THE other steerage passengers were, on the whole, rather considerate of old Hagopian's comfort. True, it did not matter very much, because he rarely needed anything, and when he did, his nephew, young Hagopian, was only too willing to attend to him. None the less, it was comforting to know that they all wished him well. The first few days had been a little hard. They all knew that Hagopian was being deported from the United States because his mind was unsound; so, in the beginning, they looked at him furtively, out of the corners of their eyes. But they soon got over that, and the Armenian was grateful that he was no longer watched by the people among whom he was to live on his journey back to Europe. Hagopian felt particularly drawn toward the young Polish girl, who, according to rumor, was being turned back because she could neither read nor write.

On days when it was not too rough or when the steerage-deck was not being used for some special purpose, young Hagopian would bring the little folding camp-stool from their cabin, and his uncle would sit there, an hour or two, amid his fellow-passengers and the odd stokers that happened to be off-duty and to have nothing much else to do. Sometimes the Polish girl came with him. When they passed another ship there was great excitement on board; everybody jostled everybody else in order to get a better view; jokes were exchanged about the shape or size or speed of the steamer. Hagopian and the girl alone remained unmoved. Once

only was she otherwise. It was the day they went by the *Majestic* bound for New York. Young Hagopian always managed, somehow or other, to borrow a pair of glasses and to distinguish the identity of the ships, and, as the *Majestic* went by, he shouted his information for their benefit. The objective of the ship doubtless stirred memories of all sorts in her mind, and, in a flow of unintelligible words, she gave vent to the bitterness and resentment that she had nursed in her long silences.

But to Hagopian, who pressed her hand and nodded sympathetically, it did not matter at all. She was young, wasn't she? and were there not greater tragedies for a young girl than the mere fact of refusal of permission to enter America? She took the thing to heart, of course, but she would get over it. Anything was possible for her, she had her whole life to live. Some day she would laugh at the memory of it and be devoutly glad that she had not been able to read and write. He felt with her, poor thing, rather than for her. No pity, really, because pity implied superiority of fortune or greater wisdom. Sympathy, rather; suffering together.

But, in so far as himself was concerned, ships might come and go to and from America and Europe, it did not matter at all. Nothing really mattered now any more. Certainly not the First-Class passengers who came to stare at the maniac they had heard was being deported; and certainly not the steward with the leer, who pushed him about when young Hagopian was not there to look after him. The steward, naturally, was sane, even if he did take pleasure in brutalizing a helpless man; the Polish

girl was sane enough; whether she could write or not; and there was the triumph of sanity pictured on the vapid faces of the First-Class passengers that stared at one as at an animal in the Zoo. Everyone was sane except himself, Hagopian.

In a vague, futile way, he wished he might show some degree of interest when his nephew told him that the ship had done three-hundred and thirty-two miles that day; or that he might discuss the Turkish situation with the Greek lady who was returning to Smyrna; or even that he might sing when the Polish girl hummed, under her breath, the weird, monotonous tune she did. He wished he might be interested enough to prove to them all, in some way, that he was *not* mad, and that the whole business was a tragically idiotic mistake. But that was impossible. He had tried to explain to his nephew, to the very son of his own brother Agadjan, and the boy had looked worried. So Hagopian had not bothered from that moment on. They thought him mad: very well. Perhaps he was. Anyhow it did not matter, any more than the sunny days when everyone smiled or the gray, bleak days when he could not keep from remembering. . . .

II

THINGS are recalled less in their essence than by other events that serve to mark their time in the existence of a man. It was curious, thought Hagopian, how again and again America played a part in his life, and it was even more curious that he should be able to live over in his memory all the facts of the past with none of the rancor they stirred at the time. It was like looking at a series of photographed scenes in which he assumed various positions whose sole significance was in the mere change and movement. Perhaps that was what age did to one.

There was the day that his wife and Anna, his twelve-year-old daughter, left for America. Hagopian had saved a

long time toward that; in the end, however, his brother, Agadjan, young Hagopian's father, had been obliged to lend him the greater part of the necessary money.

It must have been in 1888, the year the taxes were raised. And it was April, because he remembered what a mild, beautiful day it was and how freshly the sun broke through the dawn. Anna cried, but her childish grief vanished before the wonder of the long drive to the station, of the great horse with black and silver trappings, the engine that was to bear them away. A strident whistle . . . his wife's lips—(she too was crying now)—a last look at their faces, Anna's with a smudge of soot on her left cheek . . . swift words of farewell . . . his waving his handkerchief long after the train had passed the bend and disappeared from sight . . . the long melancholy drive homeward through the blue noon . . .

After that, letters. His wife was in Buffalo, a charwoman in a church; Anna was going to high-school. Soon after, his wife's sickness: if only she could find something else, the work in the church was so hard. Anna's photograph, taken by a boy friend of hers. She was popular with the boys and no wonder! Almost every night, it seemed, some boy took her out to the movies or to a dance-hall. She must be becoming a worry to her mother, when she insisted on her leaving the latch-key under the mat and going to bed. She had grown so American!

Anna's letter, then; in 1894; they had been gone six years. Her mother was dead. She had been ailing a long time but they had not informed him. What was the use of worrying him, there was nothing he could do? She died in comparative ease. Anna seemed almost to be blaming her mother for the death which prevented herself from finishing high-school. Still, she thought she might be getting married soon: there was a young man, a compatriot, Serkis Stepanian. Then came the letter telling of the triple event of her marriage, Sarkis's naturalization and his changing his name to

John A. Stevens. She enclosed a little money for she had heard that things were hard in Armenia that winter. She wished it were more; by now, though, he must have saved almost enough to come over. Wouldn't he pay them a visit? He might even come to live with them permanently: there were many jobs in America for a man like himself.

What futile things letters were! There seemed always to be promises and yet nothing was ever actually realized! They took for granted so many things that were no more than potential, and always there occurred something to render the potentiality null.

It was the war that finally brought Hagopian to his daughter. The war seemed more phantasmagoric; no incidents stood forth so clearly as those of immediately before and immediately after. One morning in the autumn he suddenly awakened to hear hell let loose in the village. It was all strange, melodramatically unreal. Why in the name of fortune should the village be burning? Why was he escaping in this way?

The very unreasonable turn of events brought him to the realization that he would have remained in danger, incapable of moving away from a spectacle that he would have watched with incredulous curiosity. It was the thought of Anna that rallied him and kept him from giving in the night he dodged that cordon of Turkish cavalry; and through his subsequent misery he was constantly buoyed up by the hope of getting to America, of joining her and of finding a new comfort for his old age.

It was strange of him to think of her always as the little girl that he had sent off with her mother so many years ago, and yet in spite of her marriage and of the children she had borne, he could not school himself to do otherwise. Moreover, even though again and again something in one of her rare letters might disturb him it never went deep enough to be considered more seriously than a school-girl blunder. Naturally her old home seemed remote, now; of course the lengthy distance and the pro-

longed separation had made of them almost strangers. But let him once see her again and it would be perfectly easy to take up the thread where it had been laid down.

This war business was sad, all the sadder for its large stupidity. In spite of the racial feeling he was supposed to hold, he could not think more ill of the Turks than of anybody else. It must be a political and economic question, or, in wider terms, a biological one; certainly it was not religious. The Turks were deeply moved by their own creeds; they would not persecute his people merely because they believed in Christ! Christ was to them no more than a very picturesque legend; to kill his followers was akin to slapping a child on the mouth because it was making a fuss over a particular doll. And how many real followers were there? His cousin in Zophlis was the most devout Christian he had ever known, and he was a merchant who profited by the patronage of the Methodist Mission! People died for Christ—but that type of person would find something else to die for if Christ did not exist.

His first contact with American civilization left him puzzled. There was a Y. M. C. A. secretary attached to the American Relief Mission that took him up. When they arrived, this man, Saunders, went out of his way to be agreeable to Hagopian; he plied coffee and bread upon him and would not be gainsaid when it came to being joined in the singing of larmoyant hymns which to the Armenian were incomprehensible and which the American intoned with a wheezy unctuousness. Anyhow, Hagopian would have sworn that it was Saunders who snatched the jeweled crucifix that had been in his family so long.

Again, on the cruiser that brought him to Greece, he was surprised at the sailors. Their frank, open heartiness, the sheerness of them filled him with admiration. One evening he heard a group of them singing what he supposed was an American folk-song since it dealt with Christopher Columbus. From

the accompanying laughter and leers he discovered that they were simply rehearsing a bawdy song. How curious must a people be whose sole lyric celebration of a national heroic figure was in terms of beastliness!

The rest of his memories were but landmarks to his progress toward America. Paris, where his brother Agadjan was settled. Agadjan had lent him money without a murmur for he had done well, now he owned a small café in Saint-Cloud and a large restaurant in the Rue Soufflot, where the students of the Sorbonne came to eat pila and other foreign dishes. Agadjan agreed that the best thing for his brother to do was to join Anna in America; he would send his son to keep his brother company. The boy had finished school and he might look around; if he saw anything promising in America he could stay there, if not he could return to his father's business. And if Hagopian himself were not satisfied, there still was always a welcome from his brother and a room in the apartment facing the Luxembourg!

So it was that early in the spring, almost thirty years after Anna had left, Hagopian and his young nephew set off together for America.

III

THERE was nothing memorable about the journey toward America. The other passengers on the boat were Italians and Greeks; Hagopian found no countrymen of his. Looking back over it, he came to see that he had regarded the whole passage as merely a necessary postponement. His goal was Anna: he lived, really, only for the moment when once again he would hold her in his arms, once again hear the voice of his wife talking to him through the lips of their daughter. Young Hagopian was unable to grasp the significance of his uncle's hopes and thoughts. He was too young, and experience alone would show him. In the first days, it appeared to Hagopian that Agadjan's son had begun by being amused at his

uncle's steadfast ardor, but later it had annoyed him. He had glanced at other people while Hagopian was talking to him; he had begged him not to raise his voice so, not to excite himself.

Through the long years that he had been separated from Anna, Hagopian had been contained; he had schooled himself to control any inclination he might have toward confiding to anybody the hunger that was in his heart. But ever since he had been with Agadjan he had changed. The time for the separation to come to an end was so near, the very days of it were numbered. Perhaps the old man could scarcely believe it himself and had constantly to repeat the various circumstances to himself, or better still, to others so that he could watch the effect upon them, in order thoroughly to assure himself that it was all true.

He told all the passengers. A Frenchman seemed sympathetic at first but later came to avoid him; others pitied him for his almost pathetic desire to unburden himself of his thoughts but tried not to be the object of his confidences. So he turned in toward himself, told himself what he would tell others. This and certain unfortunate blunders that anyone was liable to commit were likely the reason for which they had come to consider him a little cracked.

New York. They watched the steamers in the harbor, drew each other's attention to tall buildings, to the Statue of Liberty, to the Hudson flowing bleakly through the city. . . . But to Hagopian this meant absolutely nothing. He had not gone to bed that night: when the others rose at five o'clock so they might miss nothing, they had found him already scanning the shoreline with avid scrutiny. Anna would be there to meet him as soon as the boat docked.

He ran from one side of the ship to the other, jostled the sailors who were bringing the baggage from the hold, and, in his almost delirious joy, scarcely realized what he was doing. He was laughing and now, suddenly and inex-

plicably, he was crying. It was absurd and oh God! it was wonderful. Anna!

Young Hagopian gave him up. There was nothing for him to do about it save to apologize to the people in whose way his uncle thrust himself. There was a tall Russian who pushed Hagopian out of his way with an oath, so that the old man landed against the rail of the deck with a blow that almost stunned him. He hit the side of his head against it and skinned his forehead so the blood ran. The Russian and he quarreled furiously until the former went away telling young Hagopian that his uncle was a madman, that he should be watched, that he never should be allowed to enter the country and that at Ellis Island he would make it his business to inform the Medical Officer that the Armenian was dangerous. This so infuriated Hagopian that it needed his nephew and two other passengers, who held onto him, to prevent him from throttling the Russ.

A little knot of people gathered about him and watched with more curiosity than sympathy the impotent rage of the old man. A sailor ran up suddenly and demanded to know what was the matter. He heard one or two details from a Georgian, a friend of the Russ, and moved away saying he would report the incident before ever they were allowed to land. Young Hagopian was losing his temper and thrusting his nails into his uncle's flesh at the wrist. Hagopian subsided.

IV

ELLIS ISLAND. Why wasn't Anna there? what were they telling young Hagopian? what the devil was that damned sailor doing? That other man must be the official doctor. Now the other passengers were moving off into another room. There were left only himself, his nephew, the doctor fellow, the sailor and two policemen. What were they asking him?

An interpreter at last was sent for. Hagopian asked him what was happening, but the man offered no explanation.

An old lady with a white cap on her head joined them; she seemed to be giving orders. Hagopian explained to the interpreter how unnecessary all this was: Anna had surely come to meet him; why didn't they just wait for her? She might have been delayed a little. Let them all go away and leave him; he was waiting for her; he would be all right.

Why did the men ask him such stupid questions? was the interpreter really saying in Armenian what the Doctor was asking him in English? It must be impossible: this countryman of his was making a fool of him to be talking so. As he told him this, the interpreter glanced meaningly at the doctor. The latter looked him over carefully and shook his head. He whispered one word: *Observation*.

"They are going to take you to a comfortable room where you can rest until your daughter comes," the interpreter told him kindly. Young Hagopian nodded:

"You'll be all right, uncle!"

He felt an immense weariness surging over him like a great wave, dragging him down, as it were, leaving him with nothing more conscious than an irresistible desire to sleep. He should have gone to bed the night before, he should have taken things easy; he should not have become so enraged over the jostling of the Russ.

He would not resist, it was useless. The policemen there in the corner would pick him up like a small child and humiliatingly bundle him off wherever the doctor suggested. They might even prevent him from seeing Anna unless he behaved himself. He did not understand what was going on, but perhaps it was for the best. A different country, different customs; possibly this was a regular formality. Perhaps the landing of the steerage people was in some way retarded and the others were waiting elsewhere. The doctor seemed on the whole a pretty good sort of chap; maybe he noticed Hagopian was sleepy and was having him go to bed until it was time for him to land and see Anna. All

right, he would go. They led him to a little trim room with a white bed. Sunshine. Air. Coolness. God! how he needed sleep.

V

THREE days passed. Every morning the doctor and the interpreter came in, talked to him; treated him as though he were an invalid. He kept on asking them tirelessly for his daughter. Young Hagopian had landed and had joined her, they told him. She would be arriving soon.

It maddened him to stay so long with nothing to do, when by right he should be with Anna, in her house. The little room that had seemed full of cheer and peace was bare and blatant. He wasn't sick: why in hell didn't they leave him alone, let him get up? Whenever he asked them that they looked very serious: it was idiotic. Why, if he hadn't a strong mind and a firm purpose it was enough to drive a man mad!

The gray-haired lady with the little cap on her head was always in and out and always sympathetic. With her alone he felt he was safe; the others he could not fathom. She brought him games to play that he did not understand or wish to; but he always nodded thanks to her. The hours dragged so that he used to sing to himself to pass away the time; or he would improvise the scene of his meeting with Anna, acting out in dialogue her part and his:

"Anna! child! it has been so long. . . ."

"Father! father!"

"Why did you keep me waiting? . . . This place . . . I'm so glad—"

After a while they would come in and interrupt him, try to have him stop talking aloud. Strange people, strange people!

VI

HE awoke. All of them were around him. The doctor, the interpreter, the lady; and there was Hagopian in a new suit and behind him . . . Anna? Could

that be Anna, that tall lady with the serious face and the troubled, cold eyes?

"Anna!" he called to her.

She walked to his bedside, paused a moment as though bracing herself for an ordeal. Her head was down by his, and the cold cheek moved indifferently against his jaw. Her lips now; he clung fast to her, sobbing. They kissed . . . but it was meaningless . . . it was a stranger doing something mechanical. He looked at her: she had his chin, his nose. But her eyes: dear God! what had they done to her eyes? No—it was absurd. This woman wasn't his daughter at all. Anna would have been overjoyed at seeing him; she would have thrown her arms around him; clung to him; wept on his shoulders. Young Hagopian looked ill at ease, too. No—it was a trick! The doctor and the interpreter were testing him. Why? why? Perhaps . . . the Russian and his threat. Good God! Perhaps they thought him mad and so they were trying this scheme on him. It was absurd, utterly idiotic, ridiculous. How could his nephew countenance it?

Well, he would show them how sane he was. The fools!

"Take her away," he screamed to the interpreter, "this woman's not my daughter! I don't know her. Take her away! And all of you, damn you, get out of here. Leave me in peace until you bring my daughter to me. Get out!"

They tried to soothe him. His head ached terribly. Something seemed to be splitting under his scalp; there was a kind of singing in his brain. Through a dim mist he managed to hear the woman who had pretended to be Anna telling young Hagopian about her inability to put up a bond . . . to look after someone in that state . . . she had her family. . . .

Then at last, quiet. Blankness. Sleep.

VII

IN a vague, futile way he wished he might show some degree of interest.

when his nephew told him that the ship had done three hundred and thirty-two miles that day; or that he might discuss the Turkish situation with the Greek lady who was returning to Smyrna; or even that he might sing when the Polish girl hummed under her breath, the weird, monotonous tune she did. But

that was impossible. They thought him mad. Very well. Perhaps he was. Anyhow it did not matter. Nothing mattered in any way at all. Certainly days were of no consequence, neither sunny days when everybody smiled nor yet the gray, bleak days when he could not help remembering. . . .



Counsel to Killers, Quicktriggers, Wiseacres, Monitors, King Kleagles, Parents, Pedants, Politicians and All Manner of Homunculi

By Basil Thompson

A CUIRASS is a weapon of a sort,
And a weapon of a sort is a colt,
Bumpkins think they can kill with a curse,
But silence is a lightning bolt.

Handgrenades, homilies, hells and disaster,
Poisonous gases and disease,
Bombs and platitudes have taken their toll,
But the unsaid word is surer than these.

Man has grown used to such pale terrors
As obsolete now as the sword,
Nothing at all is nothing at all
Weighed against the unsaid word.

A cool gibe is a weapon of a sort,
And a weapon of a sort is a jest,
Simpletons think they can kill with a quip,
But the unsaid word is deadliest.



THE theory of reincarnation runs aground on the puzzle as to what most women did in the last life to deserve having such husbands as they have got in this one.



The Hunt

By John McClure

GAY Thomas rode with hawks and hounds
Seeking game early.
He met a maid on the eildon downs.
Her eyes were pearly.

And stemmed she out of fairyland
Or was she bred in heaven
Thomas would never have cared to ask
Had he wondered even.

For Thomas carried a golden penny
Minted to pay for love,
Gay Thomas he remembered many
He could have bought it of.

Gay Thomas he recalled with fervor
Thousands of wenches fair as sin,
But none with lips so full of color,
Such pearl-white skin.

And stemmed she out of fairyland
Or was she bred abed,
Or did she come in guilty grace
From the too-lovely dead.

Gay Thomas only saw her beauty,
Gay Thomas only saw her eyes
When Thomas heard the fiery comets
Churning in the skies.

Gay Thomas doffed his goose-gray feather.
Splendor alive was he.
(But Thomas heard the whales of doom
Churning in the sea.)

"O was you fond of any man
And will you fondle me
And would you like a golden penny
And is your fancy free?"

The maiden peered with pearly eyes.
Herself was still as snow.
(Gay Thomas heard the constellations
Churning to and fro.)

*"Or can you fondle any man
And are you what you seem?"
Her eyes were like the silver metal,
Her lips were sealed in dream.*

*Gay Thomas heard the whales of doom
Shouldering the waves,
And Thomas heard the hogs of doom
Uprooting in the graves.*

*Daft Thomas heard the constellations
Churning in the air,
And Thomas knew the bulk of love
And splendor of despair.*



Anti-Climax

By John Torcross

"AND now," he explained, "I am off to Buckingham Palace!"
With these words he made his exit left centre, washed the grease paint from his face, changed his collar and, diving into the nearest Subway, rode all the way to Mott Avenue.



WHEN men speak in whispers it is about women. When women speak in whispers it is about women.



IT is the law of compensation; they who talk most before marriage listen most afterward.



ROMANCE: the other man's wife. Reality: the other woman's husband.



LOVE is the tax on friendship, marriage the surtax.



Near a Park

By *Lois Seyster Montröss*
[Co-author of "Town and Gown"]

I

SHE was the sort of woman who engages in long, detailed conversations over the telephone, having no other easy channel to human intercourse save by way of a black transmitter while a child pulls petulantly at her skirts; the sort of woman who recounts in these conversations what she is going to have for dinner and what her husband wrote on the postcard he sent from Sioux City, Iowa.

Connie's husband traveled for the Manton Satin Company. He had it the easiest, Connie always said. It was she who was left at home to take care of the kids.

"And, my God, when do I ever get out?" she would ask, not bitterly, but humorously, one hand on her soft, vulgar hip. Her softness and vulgarity were, strangely enough, her nearest approach to charm.

She asked this rhetorical question of Bernice Skinner, her most intimate friend, whom she saw only a few times a year, but talked to over the telephone whenever Bernice was not at the Turquoise Studio. And even to Bernice she essayed many proud equivocations about the tolerableness of life.

Connie bragged of Bernice Skinner to people who lived about: to the awed, bedraggled woman across the hall; to the familiar telephone collector, who always sneered superciliously and claimed to know Rose Dupré, a "real star"; to the man who dropped in, hopelessly and persistently, to rehearse his worn sales talk about vacuum cleaners.

Privately, Connie had no respect for Bernice's "extra" work at the tramp Turquoise Studio on Wells Street.

Connie knew what it was. Hadn't she done it? Hadn't she waited around an expensive apartment, broke, idle and aimless, waiting for the call from the flip assistant director? Hadn't she made wild haste to "be at the Studio at eight o'clock sharp, dearie," dragging awkward parcels of costume and make-up with her in the crammed street car; hadn't she suffered the impudent remarks of little chits of high school girls (whose mamas thought they were at school) in the crowded dressing-room, with Bernice for her only solace? She knew the nasty, caked feeling of dry mascara on burning eyelashes and the drafts that chilled you while you sat in pajamas waiting all day to go on a set that was never called.

And you got two dollars and a half, three and a half, for the days you wore the make-up. The days you sat around the apartment with Bernice, listening for the telephone, you got nothing and you ate baked beans, stale bread without butter, and the milk an unpaid milkman left at the back door.

True, there was something delicious about those idle days. Maybe Al Benson or Al Hobart called up, and you and Bernice, in a sudden flurry of excitement, dressed for hours, applied rouge to each other's cheeks, waved one another's hair, exchanged clothes, studying the effects of large, flopping black velvet hats and extravagant-looking paste earrings. You went to the "Dells" or the "Green Mill," dined astoundingly on shrimp cocktails, planked steak, endive salad and French pastry. You smoked triumphantly, dropping vicious glances right and left at the other women. You drank from silver flasks and leaned in drowsy contentment

against male, cigar-drenched shoulders, while your feet did gay things quite out of time to the unctuously blue jazz.

Or, afternoons, if the telephone remained mute and cold, you and Bernice decided to walk in the park and, having dressed again with keen eyes for dramatic effects, you swaggered forth, hoping that all watchers behind apartment curtains glimpsed you as "those movie actresses." The park was splashed with sunshine and the benches were vantage points from which to view the women's clothes and intercept the men's bold stares. Strange acquaintances were made there, queer adventures happened. In a park you were separated from your past—you were linked to nothing—you could seem as aristocratic as your clothes, as leisurely as your most casual yawn. Parks were the gardens of the unknown to Connie—oases of illusion in a desert of reality.

Bernice was still leading such a life. Connie had given it up for Horace Meerschmidt. As she told Bernice, it was easier to let a man be your meal-ticket. Of course Horace was loud-mouthed; she admitted that readily; and, too, he saw things so big it was funny. He was always going to be a branch manager or a director or a God-knows-what. And, of course, he never was—poor old Horace! He was too easy, too good-natured.

The Meerschmidts had lived first on North Clark Street—she had been ashamed of that place after the buoyant pretense of the Fuller Avenue apartment with Bernice. But Horace made so little and it took such vast amounts to feed him. Of course he was in love then, and he went out on the road as seldom as possible, pretending one thing or another to the Manton Satin Company. Bad business, certainly. But Horace was *like that*. She accepted him, just as she accepted the babies. . . .

She had tried to seize upon some feature of each successive flat with which to impress Bernice. But there was nothing, nothing. The same dark, dank kitchen; green, scrofulous calcimine; antique bathtubs like sarcophagi; dismal, blue-tiled gas grates; scabby woodwork.

The same outlook on zigzagging back stairs and mouldy, gray courts.

She but vaguely realized that her surroundings engendered dreariness of spirit; resigned to suffer without analyzing her infrequent periods of misty melancholy, she swept all moods of depression into one current catch-all, "the blues."

"I'm awfully low this morning, honey," she would telephone Bernice. "It sure is funny how I get these old blues once in a long while."

"You always was temperamental, Con."

Before the talk was over, some joke of Bernice's would tickle Connie and send her into loud laughter; she would return to her "blues" with new enjoyment of her despondency, finding it almost an adventure to plunge into depths of rare, undefined wistfulness.

Then she had dropped out of sight for a long while, overburdened with, rather than ashamed of, her drab domesticity; and it was years after her marriage that she had found time to renew the old fellowships.

She would not soon forget the time she had brought the two Als and Bernice up to the fourth apartment in the Gladiola on West Erie Street. She had happened to meet them in the Loop. She was wearing her black jersey suit and cream lace vest—looking much the same Connie, a bit fatter, but with the same pleasant huskiness in her coarse, spontaneous speech. Al Hobart's big automobile found the apartment house. They tumbled, laughing, into the hall. The cracked plaster walls, the dirty electric bulb, the worn stair carpet did not affront Connie in her joyous zeal for a "real time." Bernice and the men had been drinking gin and saw everything through a kindly, juniper-tinged haze.

They were in the "front" room, shrieking pleasantries, playing the strident phonograph, uptilting flasks, imitating vaudeville actors.

Connie had to slip quickly into the kitchen, where Imogene had been taking care of the baby, Lester, and to assure Imogene that the noise only meant

that some of mama's old friends had come to see her. She had to feed the two and get them to bed, plunging anxiously in and out of the bathroom for diapers and safety-pins and Imogene's panty-drawers, hushing Lester, and wondering what she could get for dinner. The children cried in savage rage at being put to bed so early—her head went around from the unaccustomed din—she wished Al Benson wouldn't imitate that cabaret singer's "Yey-a-hoo-oo" continually.

She ran into the front room several times to make sure that they were enjoying themselves, but they were all sitting in a sprawled heap on the green divan and she had a hard time to make herself heard. Then they pressed gin upon her, and its half-forgotten sweetish rancor made her a bit dizzy. Back in the kitchen she burned the toast and was not sure what she was putting into the creamed tuna fish. She thought the dining-room looked very handsome later, with the five lights of the chandelier ablaze and the great pieces of cut glass on the built-in sideboard all tingling with color. She was proud of her hand-painted bread and butter plates and the thin glasses that jingled at a touch.

She thought to herself triumphantly that nothing could change her—she would always be the old Connie, out for a good time, ready to catch a joke, easy to know. She visioned successions of little parties, only with new people and always in strange, exciting relations with them. Her life *had* been romantic when she stopped to think. How queer it seemed, the Als and Bernice and she here together after all these years! And Horace gone out of town. She couldn't help her streak of Bohemianism—she would never change. She was made to dash about with artists like these (Al Benson was the assistant director of the Turquoise Studio now)—she would always be young. Nobody guessed she was thirty-seven. . . .

She could not make them so much as enter the dining-room. She could not make them understand. She should have remembered from long past epi-

sodes with these friends that it would be that way. The hot dinner cooled into tepid sogginess. The cut glass sparkled unnoticed. An Al on either side of her, Bernice sat smoking sulkily, indifferent to their indifferent, sodden arms entangled about her thin shoulders. It appeared she had quarreled with one of them and wanted to go home. She plastered another layer of rouge, powder and red paste over her cheeks and lips and went out swearing.

Connie ate a bit of the cold food pensively. New, strange people she wanted. Younger men than these stupid old ones and other women who could tell her fortune with cards, gossip about movie actresses, be candid about their dress bargains and call her dearie with some warmth.

Still she wondered later why she had no overtures from Hobart and Benson and why she finally had to call Bernice on the telephone. It wasn't her fault the reunion had turned out so wretchedly. *She* hadn't changed.

II

HORACE was elated, as always, when he took the apartment on the South Side of Chicago. "It'll knock you for a row of Chinese pagodas, Con. Swell! It's the bee's knees."

"But we've never lived on the South Side. And all my friends live North." She referred mysteriously to these friends of hers to Horace, and believed in them as much as he did.

"Hell, Con, it's cheaper out South, and I'm sick of seeing you in this joint on Erie. Erie ain't any great shakes, even if it is North. Want to live on Wilson Avenue or Sheridan Road, do you? Well, listen Hon-old-girl, we'll be there yet. I was talking to Barnes yesterday down at the main office and he has a plan for making me office manager right here in town. Not so bad for old Horace, hey?"

. . . She had heard all that. She had heard it so often that she didn't listen any more.

They moved "out South." Horace had said this new place was near a park.

Near a park. . . . She fancied herself strolling idly in a new, well-cut, midnight-blue dress—a close-fitting little turban—Colonial slippers—through this strange, unexplored park; catching the eye of a man with an English moustache, sitting on a bench with him, letting him see how jolly, adventuresome, good-natured and still frivolous she was.

"I'm thirty-one, you know."

"Honestly? Don't kid me, little lady! I wouldn't put you a day past twenty-five."

He and his friends, when Horace was gone, filling the apartment near the park with laughter and "keen" jokes and all Bohemian gaieties! The girls would say:

"Gosh, I wish I had a little place of my own like this one. You sure are a good scout, dearie, and you look so young to have those big kids! And ain't they good! How do you do it all?"

It was great fun to arrange the old furniture in the newly decorated rooms. It really was a pleasant little place for such a small rental. There was a shower in the bathroom. The shower had no curtain, true, but she meant to get one. And later she would buy rose-colored silk poplin window draperies and a rose-shaded floor lamp for the living-room. When she placed the old card table covered with a square of "tapestry" in the hall, she could see unfamiliar coats and hats and furs on it; she could see new, gay friends in the kitchen helping her to prepare little midnight lunches. She even visioned the automobile that would one day drive her home from the park.

Imogene off to school, she was free to dawdle about her work, picking up the baby's toys, sweeping negligently, "changing" Lester, feeding, rocking him. When he was asleep she snatched her lunch—queer odds and ends such as women eat at noon, swallowed while she stood by the window, or sometimes nibbled at from the very frying-pans in which they had been warmed over. She would go to peep at Lester to see if he had kicked off the covers three or four times during this uneasy lunch. She

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felt when it was over that another duty of the day had been accomplished. Nevertheless, she always allowed herself the dessert of a cigarette afterward, Turkish, which she smoked very short and crushed out against the oilcloth of the kitchen table. She glanced dreamily at old books of poems by Laurence Hope or Ella Wheeler Wilcox which were tucked away behind the kitchen cabinet.

She would think pleasurably: "Can't get around it. There's a romantic, a Bohemian streak in me." She watched the woman across the court hanging up clothes—"Poor thing, she has it hard. Lets herself go. I don't look more than twenty-five. Guess I'll always be the same old Con."

Some day she meant to hire that woman's daughter to stay with Lester, and then she would walk in the park.

She described the new apartment to Bernice over the telephone. She thought she really ought to ask Bernice out, too. But when she did, Bernice would always say: "Oh, you Southsiders! You live so far a person can't expect to see you any more."

"But listen, Bernice, you'll like it once you get here. It's really swell, and right near a park."

Bernice lived near a street-car line. She was patently envious.

"Oh, is it? Remember how we used to step out in that park over near Fullerton? Don't tell me we didn't have fun. 'Them days is gone forever'."

"Not for me, they're not," Connie cut in with coy insinuation. "Come out and meet some of my new friends, Sweetie."

"I'll do that." . . . And when the English-moustached person or the "doggy" little dancer from the Crystal Palace made their entrance into Connie's life she *would* have Bernice over. Poor Bernice, it was a hard life she led in that nasty studio still doing "extras" with Al Hobart always promising her a lead and always putting her off.

III

CONNIE liked to lie in bed until she could ignore Lester's blustering cries no

longer. That habit meant that Imogene's preparations for school were daily matters of wild hurry and clock watching. Sighing in relief at the closing of the door, Connie never failed to relapse into the overstuffed rocker and smoke a cigarette to induce calm and contentment.

She always thought of the park during that brief siesta; she planned how she could make over her old serge suit with a bit of brick-red wool embroidery on it somewhere. Because her picture of it was so complete, so beautifully finished in every detail, she had no heart to begin a labor that could not resemble her dream for many days. And certainly she would not do herself the injustice of approaching adventure, looking her thirty-seven years.

The days slipped along, and on one of them Horace appeared from St. Louis.

"Had hard luck this trip, Babe. I'm usually a lucky devil at poker, but this time—wow! . . . Say, Con, there's a slick little kitchenette apartment for rent over North. You're always howling about being South, and you've got so many friends over there. Like to move back?"

She knew it was the rent, of course. Horace couldn't even meet *that* this time.

"Well, it would be nice to be close to my friends, of course," she said, magnanimously accepting his evasion.

"Now if you like it here better, Hon—?"

Poor old Horace was always so anxious to please her, desirous of making her believe that he really was a big man, a man for whom life was just opening out grandly. And Horace was forty-two—or was it forty-three?—in August.

"You know I'm apt to swing that little business with Barnes any day." He narrowed his pudgy eyelids and spoke confidentially from one mouth corner. "This little kitchenette place would be closer to my office. It's on Grand Avenue."

"It isn't near a park! And it was so nice here, being only a few blocks from this one."

"I know. But it's just temporary till I can bring Barnes around."

They moved to the small rooms on Grand Avenue. It was a day in May that the van took their furniture; and as they stood on the corner waiting for the street car in which they were to follow, Connie unreasoningly felt the buoyancy of Spring leaping in her spirit.

Inside the street car, they rode past Washington Park, where the grass was a new mottled green and the trees interlaced their leaves again in shy, friendly weaving.

Connie pressed closer to the window, glimpsing the park eagerly as an old friend, forgetting that she had never known it, drinking in its possibilities in her swift transit. That was a lovely, shiny, maroon and tan Buick parked there—the man in it, alone, appraising the women who passed with knowing eyes . . . his long, black cigarette holder, his plaid overcoat—

She breathed quickly, staring back at her illusion as long as she could see.

* * *

Connie called Bernice on the telephone that night. Bernice must come now they were North again. She could bring over an interesting bunch of new acquaintances, maybe?

"My life is sure one crazy story, dearie," said Connie through the black transmitter. "Isn't it queer now, really—me being back again, around where I lived before?"

"It sure is romantic, Con! I knew you'd never like it out South so well."

"Oh, I did though, Bernice. It was a slick little place. And with the park right close—"

"Met a swell bunch of steppers there, did you?"

"Oh—did I! Listen, Bernice, come out and meet them some time. One with a black moustache—and a daddy that drives one of those new Buicks—plaid overcoat—everything!" It was real to her, real, and she exulted. "Well, you know how I am, to have a wild time!"

"You'll never change, Connie."

"No, I'll never change."

The London Stage

By George Jean Nathan

I

LONDON—great gray-green sun-splotched London—gray-lavender London in the evening mist—majestic and beautiful in the throb of the season, a pauper and tawdry within its theatre walls. Not a single new play of English birth worth a continental. Not a single new English play in this land of Shakespeare and Sheridan and Shaw, of Congreve and Pinero and Galsworthy, to free the present British stage from its apparent complete bankruptcy. "It is significant," observes the gifted and cosmopolitan Walkley, pouring out a mutual fourteenth seidel of Sauterne, "that the two most conspicuous playwrights on our stage at the moment are (here an ironically audible imbibation) Mr. A. A. Milne and (here a homeric gulp) Mr. John Drinkwater." "It is perhaps even more significant," puts in the scholarly Archer, manoeuvring for the bottle with a difficultly managed and unconvincing indifference, "that I never go to the London theatre these days without supplying myself in advance with a package of snuff in order that I may remain awake. I find, however, that the quality of the snuff sold in London must be getting very poor."

The London stage of the moment is, so far as British drama goes, the weakest national stage in the world. There may be a different story to tell tomorrow, but, as I write, the story is one of preposterous ineffectuality. What the English stage currently reveals of interest is entirely foreign: American plays and American performers, the French Guitrys with their Parisian

farces, the Italian Eleonora Duse—all imported to give life to a comatose English theatre by that most enterprising of British producers, Charles B. Cochran, liaison officer between the living and the dead. The rest is silence.

Of the American plays and players that have put their shoulders to the heavy wheel of English theatrical dol-drums, it is unnecessary to speak: they are already sufficiently familiar to you. Let us pass on to the others. First, Duse. The old glamour is still there. The sixty-odd years have left behind them a woman somewhat feeble, but still possessed of the echo of physical beauty and of what is perhaps the most dazzling histrionic power of our time. I saw her in the two outstanding features of her present repertoire: the "Cosi Sia" ("Thy Will Be Done") of Tommaso Gallarati-Scotti, a third-rate so-called Mystery, written in the elementary form of the old religious dramas, that received a somewhat violent raspberry when it was originally produced in Italy, and old Henrik's woe of woe, "La Donna del Mare" ("The Lady from the Sea"). For all the amateurishness of the stage settings contrived by Professor Stroppa of Milan, a supporting company several of whose members comprise a typical Morosco cast, and a prompt box that is called upon to recite the text of the play in its entirety a jump ahead of the star and the principal members of her troupe, the Duse acting genius still flashes forth. Where Bernhardt gained every single one of her greatest acting effects by a maximum of means, Duse still achieves hers with a minimum. Hers is an economy that hasn't been seen in the theatre of her

day. She acts the way Joseph Conrad writes, with the brilliance born of an imaginative, coherent and exact parsimony. Nothing is wasted. But as the years have sapped from her some of her earlier vigor, she has come to resort to a series of admirable tricks—but mere tricks withal—to further her performances and get the effects that in the years before she was wont to achieve by sounder and subtler means. These tricks, such as the nervous, staccato cutting-in on speeches, the holding up of a speech by way of gathering breath and the then sudden propulsion of the lines, the preparation for a speech by weaving its pattern in the air with the hands—these and the like are tokens of an ageing actress, an actress still radiant but moving on toward the sunset whose light already falls upon her, an actress who feels the need of props for a great but age-ridden mastery of her craft. Duse has, as ever, that one thing that every great actress has had, has and must have—something that may idiotically be described as a sad arm: that line of the arm that, when extended from the shoulder, has about it something of melancholy. This she still uses to magnificent effect: the extended right arm of Eleonora Duse has in it all the tears of “Tristan and Isolde.” Her use of her hands I leave to the professors of banality. I have long noticed that whenever a person attends a play in a foreign language with a conspicuous actor or actress in the cast, doesn’t understand so much as a single word of it, hasn’t the faintest notion of what it is all about and doesn’t know what to say but has to say something, he says that the hands of the star are wonderful.

Duse plays the role of Ellida Wangel in “The Lady from the Sea” with none of the elaborately lugubrious hocus-pocus affected by the majority of actresses who have imposed themselves upon it. She plays it unhysterically, simply, quietly—and without nonsensically dim lights—as it should be played. Her performance of the mother accused and abandoned by her son and left to die upon a far altar praying for the

conversion of her boy’s heart is, similarly, a thoroughly persuasive piece of acting.

The outstanding feature of the Guitry repertoire was, curiously enough, the performance of the little farce-comedy “Nono,” written by Guitry, Jr., in 1897—it was his first play—when he was only 18 years old. Although, according to M. Sacha, nary a line has been changed in the original draft—and one can readily take his word for it—the play is a thoroughly fresh, sharply observant and extremely amusing bit of amorous sport in the Gallic-Schnitzlerian manner, with, in the Guitry direction and performance, a wealth of as funny stage business as one has seen in a dog’s age. The manuscript is as much without weight as the rest of Guitry’s farces and comedies, but equally rich in quick little penetrations of the human comedy and in cutting appreciations of human foibles on parade. Guitry can sketch character with lightning swiftness—a word is sometimes sufficient. He can hit off a bit of light philosophy with a pucker of the lips, a whistle and a turn of the thumb. He writes in terms of a camera shutter—in a series of clicks. He is the genius of the dramatic snapshot. His is the most exceptional minor talent in the world theatre of today. His one great fault lies in the constant repetition of himself. In this “Nono,” his first play, one encounters many of the tricks and devices, verbal and otherwise, that one still encounters in his plays of 1922 and 1923. But “Nono,” none the less, is laughable stuff: the conventional tale of the betrayal of a friend and the seduction of his sweetie concealed in a tapestry of deft humour and made quick and alive with the embroideries of an experienced and examining eye. Guitry accomplishes wonders by applying simple observation to the tip of his pen. By writing—and reading—the single word “l’addition” in three different pitches at the conclusion of the restaurant scene in his first act, for example, he achieves crescendo comedy that many of his contemporaries succeed in achieving only

with a dozen or more typed pages. The same thing holds true of "Le Veilleur de Nuit" ("The Night Watchman," of which I have written in the past) and of the several other plays in his repertoire. In this repertoire, his Papa Lucien and his pretty wife, Yvonne Printemps—to say nothing of an admirable company including the excellent juvenile, Hiéronimus—lend him complete support. Papa does not appear in "Nono," however. All in all, light diversion of a high order.

II

Now for the other side of the picture; now for the English plays. First, "Robert E. Lee," by John Drinkwater, the fourth in his series of historical-biographical plays of which the earlier three were "Abraham Lincoln," "Mary Stuart" and "Oliver Cromwell." This "Lee" has the few virtues and the many defects of the Drinkwater chronicle art. Distinctly inferior to his "Lincoln," it is a sometimes pointedly contrived but much more often bombastic and poseful composition that aims at a psychological portrait of a great Confederate general and achieves instead a psychological portrait of an English actor-author. It is Mr. Drinkwater's handicap as a dramatist that the actor in him is ever vanquishing the author, with the result that, save in a few meritorious instances, the central figures in his chronicles such as Lincoln, Cromwell and Lee are considerably less Lincoln, Cromwell and Lee than, respectively, Drinkwater in a loose black Prince Albert and a frowsy top hat, in the uniform of the commander of the Parliamentary army, and in the gray regimentals of the American southern states. Drinkwater's Lee, especially, is three parts Drinkwater, the actor, to one part Drinkwater, the dramatist; of the true Lee there is, save in isolated moments, but an imperceptible trace. The Lee of the play is not the Lee of fact and history so much as the Lee of the sentimental schoolgirl imagination as it existed south of the Mason-Dixon line in the days of '61. It is this fancy

that Drinkwater has actually dramatized. What we get is not the Lee who lived, but Lee as he might have been imagined to be by his loving old negro mammy. The Drinkwater Lee, as one may perceive from the following excerpt from the play—one of many like it—is less the calm, dignified commander of the Confederate army than an actor in a Bronson Howard melodrama attitudinizing in a pretty uniform and speaking with an unremitting consciousness of the footlights in front of him:

PENNER: Oh, we're just going. Good-night, Colonel Lee.

LEE (*at the verandah door*): Good-night, Duff. But it's not Colonel Lee any longer.

PENNER: Not Colonel— (*He stands for a moment, then turns back to the dance-room excitedly, and begins to speak to the people beyond.*) I say— (*He checks himself. Then after a moment he goes up to LEE and holds out his hand.*) Will you let me, sir? (*As LEE takes his hand.*) Lee of Virginia. (*He turns hurriedly and goes.*)

LEE (*after a pause, not moving*): Virginia.

CURTAIN

But this is not all. Stating as his purpose the presentation of the essential significance of the spirit of the South in a great crisis, Drinkwater so oversentimentalizes that spirit as to make it ridiculous. The South was not without its sentiment, a deep, true sentiment; but it was above everything else thoroughly, even violently, pragmatic, practical. This practicality Drinkwater misses entirely. Instead, he absurdly translates the spirit of the South almost wholly in terms of banjo playing, renditions of "Dixie," and apostrophes to the blue Potomac and the green fields of Virginia. I do not exaggerate. In one of his scenes—the eve of the action at Malvern House, outside the tent of General Stuart—he actually introduces a banjo specialty and a quartet of the species that has seen service over here in the plantation and levee scenes in McIntyre and Heath and analogous shows. "The English production," drolly apologizes Mr. Drinkwater in the program, "deliberately makes no attempt at producing the idiomatic character of Southern America." Aside from skepti-

cally screwing one's eye at the word deliberately one may venture the opinion that it is not the production so much as the play itself that neglects to make the attempt in point and that hence achieves a likeness that is less a portrait than a caricature.

The best points in the play are its first scene, showing Lee's decision to stick to his state as against the Union, and several passages of graceful writing placed in the mouth of a young Southerner who acts as chorus. Lee is played by Felix Aylmer strictly as the role is written. It is surely not his fault that he perforce makes Lee a mere articulate mannikin. Edmund Willard attributes in his performance of the role of Stonewall Jackson many idiosyncrasies to that general that I had believed were the exclusive possession of Mr. Louis Mann. Gordon Harker does a good bit as Jefferson Davis. The play is poorly produced.

III

THE Milne contribution to the season is a fantastic comedy called "Success." Soon or late almost every other English playwright takes a go at Barrie, and now Milne once again takes his. It is no more happy than was Pinero's go called "The Enchanted Cottage," although, like the latter, it is not without its moments. But Barrie cannot be achieved by the mere process of writing an ordinary comedy and interrupting it along toward ten o'clock with a guppy dream scene, which is apparently what Mr. Milne, like Mr. Pinero, believes. The secret of Barrie, as I once before put it, is to set forth the heavily sentimental in terms of the mildly cynical—a good trick that he negotiates with uncommon skill; the achievement of Mr. Milne, who tries his hand at the same trick, is the mildly cynical in terms of the heavily sentimental. He gets his apparatus of dramatic legerdemain mixed up and the result is that the heavily sentimental fails to vanish behind the mildly cynical black velvet as Barrie deftly contrives to make it vanish. It remains disconcert-

ingly in full view of the audience with its legs crossed and confounds not only Milne's intention but the audience's imposed-upon emotional keyboard.

The new play tells the story of the ache that ever mixes with the glory of success: a story of love pushed aside that the road to success may be without obstacles; the story, further, of the manner in which success, once on the way, swallows up its man and makes him its own. As has been noted, Milne does not fail to get a few nice touches into his telling of the fable, but the net effect is of a story told with great strain. The grace and ease essential to the proper effect of a narrative of this kind are missing: there is a minimum of that fine nonchalance which Barrie so often and so adroitly manages and which invests his plays with the winning air of what may be called natural artificiality. Milne drives too hard. He tires his theme out before it is half-way up the hill.

Charles Cherry has the lead and gives a satisfactory performance. The support is competent.

IV

J. HASTINGS TURNER'S "The Lilies of the Field" is a feeble comedy of the kind that the late Charles Frohman used to import from England eighteen or twenty years ago whenever he couldn't get hold of anything else to light up the chronically dark Garrick Theatre. The sequence of scenes pretty well tells the story: Act I. The Vicarage, Wideleete, Gloucestershire; Act II. Mrs. Rooke-Walter's flat, Rutland Gate, seven weeks later; Act III. The same, the following evening. . . . A clergyman has two ultra-modern daughters eager to get to London for the season and to ensnare an available beau who has appeared upon the scene. One conceives the idea of passing herself off as a demure, mid-Victorian lass and, doing so, presently brings all of surfeited London to her feet the while the other, steadfastly up-to-date, is forced to sit aside pouting and neglected. This tale

is related in the most obvious manner imaginable and through box-office characters as obediently conventional as so many cash-registers. J. H. Roberts is good as the clergyman and the talented Miss Meggie Albanesi does all that anyone could do with the role of the sham mid-Victorian girl. Miss Gertrude Kingston gets the last drop of juice out of the role of the grandmother who invites the daughters up for their London fling, and Miss Edna Best brings her blonde good-looks to a stage that needs them.

In "At Mrs. Beam's," another in the long string of boarding-house plays, there are several good strokes of character drawing but these are swallowed up by a premise and a story that impose a pretty hard strain upon credulity. The occasional flashes of merit are suddenly snuffed out and obscured by passing clouds of showshop writing and when a flash comes again the antecedent flash has been forgotten. Yet the author, C. K. Munro, is worth a future eye; he has talent. I can't say as much, I regret, for Miss Dorothy Brandon, author of "The Outsider." All that I can find here is an obvious melodrama of the vintage of 1895 with overtones of a François De Curel in the coat of a Henry Arthur Jones, the vest of a Charles Klein and the pants of a Laura Jean Libbey. The tale of a surgeon beyond the pale who effects the cure of a cripple, with the usual love counterpoint, the play runs back to the theatre of the last generation. Leslie Faber is not a particularly likely actor for the central role. Miss Isobel Elsom manages the opposite role nicely.

As for the rest, we have the farce "Tons of Money," which has been running in London since God knows when—a cheap and infinitely tedious gimcrack; Rudolf Besier's and May Edington's "Secrets," which I reviewed upon its New York production last season; and revivals of H. V. Esmond's "Eliza Comes To Stay," an eighth-rate comedy presented here years back, of Maugham's "Jack Straw," one of his earliest and weakest pieces, of Shaw's "Major Barbara," of Hardinge's and Lang's

"Carnival," which failed dismally and appropriately when done here several years ago, and of Sudermann's venerable claptrap, "Magda," with Miss Gladys Cooper in the name part. Surely a melancholy picture of a theatre that once, and not so very long ago, was of the cut of Rome. Take from it, as I have written, its touch of Paris and of Italy, take from it the American playwrights, actors, dancers, singers and even jazz bands that give it currently what trace of life it has—and all is silent as the grave. The English theatre, to no little degree, has turned red, white and blue.

V

DANCERS, singers and jazz bands. Without the Americans the English musical comedy stage would be even more desolate than the English dramatic. The bleakness of the landscape, lighted up only by American talent, is quite unbelievable. I pose myself here as no news-gun, surely, since the English themselves are pretty well agreed on the subject. With but two exceptions. They still somehow manage to believe that Mr. Leslie Henson, stellar comique of "The Cabaret Girl," is an immensely funny fellow, when he impresses most of the rest of us outlanders as a profoundly gloomy one; and they are full of enthusiasm for the show at the Little Theatre in John Street known as the "Nine O'Clock Revue." Their enthusiasm for the latter is not difficult to understand, since even at its worst it is twice as good as anything else of its kind in London that is of home manufacture. It at least has freshness, a measure of originality and a measure of humor. But to compare it with, let us say, the show that the so-called "Forty-niners" put on last year in New York—the two exhibitions are of a general piece—is to grasp at once how little it presently takes to arouse London theatregoers to a pitch of national pride. The Forty-niners' show was intrinsically superior to the "Nine O'Clock Revue" in every department save that of acting. Its skits and burlesques were

wittier and better; its musical numbers were fresher; only its performers were inferior—for the English show rests almost wholly upon the shoulders of Morris Harvey and Beatrice Lillie. It is not that a few of the London show's sketches—both in the last version and in the one previously produced—are not genuinely amusing, so amusing in fact that they have already been cabaged in one form or another by American producers, but that the exhibit as a whole is prodigiously overestimated by a people whose other native music shows are so richly rococo that sound comparative values are almost impossible.

VI

THE American season of 1923-24 was opened with George M. Cohan's revision of a comedy by Vincent Lawrence called "Two Fellows and a Girl." These Cohan revisions are as popularly successful as they are by this time completely familiar. They take the form of prefixing to each of the author's original speeches such phrases as "By gosh," "Gee whiz," "I say, kid," "Oh baby," "I'll tell the world," and "You said a mouthful," of adding a wealth of back-slapping and thigh-slapping to the stage business, of writing in at least one mention of a million dollars and one cheer for the United States, and of deleting twenty or thirty sides of dialogue and substituting pantomime. This formula Mr. Cohan here once again follows and the result is a diverting boob opus, consistently crude but frequently running close to life of a sort, that contains one scene of a cut far above the rest of the play. This scene is in the third act and is a dialogue between the young wife and her ex-beau who has just returned in an elegantly stewed condition from a conference with a neighborhood cutie. The episode is successful in evoking a sharp and highly comical picture of what occurred, and really constitutes comedy of a considerable quality. This quality is absent from the rest of the manuscript, a cir-

cumstance which will doubtless guarantee its popular favor.

Miss Ruth Shepley plays the girl sought by two suitors well enough, but is too old for the part. John Halliday gives a very bad English imitation of George Cohan as one of the wooers, while Allan Dinehart is very good as the other. Miss Claiborne Foster is equally good in the role of a wise flapper.

VII

"IN Love With Love," also by Vincent Lawrence, is a better play than "Two Fellows and a Girl" which is made to seem not nearly so good by inexperienced manuscript treatment, casting and direction. Where Cohan has directed the latter in such wise that every one of its possible values is realized, Robert Milton has directed the former in such wise that only a professional critic is able to penetrate through the stage traffic to the underlying merit. He permits his actors to snap their fingers by way of indicating everything from doubt to decision, to fold their arms by way of indicating everything from defiance to resignation, and to paddle up and down and across the stage by way of indicating everything from perplexity to happiness. The Lawrence manuscript has a tough time battling against such cabotinage and seems to the lay audience to be guilty of things that are actually the fault of the actors and the director.

Lawrence, though he writes unevenly, has ability. It is a pity, however, that his association with Broadway has brought him to believe that little true to American life and character may be expressed save in cheap slang. The company assembled to do his play, as observed, has been directed less for a comedy than for a Russian ballet, but even so is not without its intrinsic deficiencies. Miss Lynn Fontanne, like Miss Shepley in the earlier Lawrence play, is not aptly cast for the role of the principal sweetie. Her performance is of youth but hardly by youth. It does not ring true. A frankly popular play should, as I see it, be cast in a frankly popular way. A young girl should be

a young girl. The men of the company, save for Henry Hull in a brief grief-stricken scene, disclose no especial skill.

A generous slice of *Répétition Générale's* custard pie this month should be awarded to the *Evening Telegram's* review of the play. I quote a sample sprig:

"For such perfect love lyricism one must go back to Meredith's exquisite love scene in 'Richard Feverel,' or even swing further back to a certain balcony scene by one William Shakespeare."

VIII

"TWEEDLES," by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson, is the best of the early season offerings. A kind of Tom Robertson's "Caste" jazzed up for the Broadway trade, it contains a stroke of excellent character drawing in its portrait of a soft-headed youth and at least two episodes—one of them a love scene written with charming indirection—of considerable grace. As a whole, however, the play is pretty scanty: the authors extract all the juice from their theme by the time the middle act is two-thirds over. An amiable piece of writing, the piece is still far beneath the high mark of Tarkington's admirable "Clarence." Gregory Kelly gives accurate life to the portrait of the young doodle, but it seems to me that Miss Ruth Gordon, in the opposite role, shows signs of being a May Vokes in embryo. Let us get down on our knees and pray for the poor girl's salvation.

IX

THE rest of the exhibits disclosed up to the time the gentlemen entrusted with the printing of this take a chew of tobacco and roll up their sleeves are of no discernible merit. "The Woman on the Jury," by B. K. Burns, is a Theodore Kremer melodrama by a man who has seen a play by Brioux. Miss Mary Newcomb is exceptionally good in the assemblage of soniferous pugh that is described as the leading role. "The Good Old Days," by Aaron Hoffman, contains several laughable lines and brings forth once again the national

favorite, M. George Bickel, but covers so much old ground otherwise that the doldrums set in shortly after the first act. "The Breaking Point," by Mary Roberts Rinehart, is our venerable friend, the amnesia play, the morose dido in which the leading man can't remember who he was or what he did before the first curtain goes up and who indicates his bewilderment by stopping suddenly short in the middle of a sentence and staring hard at whatever actor happens to be on the stage at the time. The second act, laid on a ranch in Wyoming, is directly out of the old H. R. Jacobs circuit of the early '90's. The curtain to this act, with the low comedy character holding the thundering sheriff at bay with a pistol, the while the other characters hold the picture at stage left, cannot be fully appreciated save one go up into the gallery with a bag of peanuts. The acting in general is on a par with the virtues of the manuscript. The play was evidently produced under the direction of an eminent football coach. In "Little Jessie James," a musical farce by Harlan Thompson, et al., amnesia does not figure in the slightest, as the authors of the book and tunes are plainly possessed of the best and most accurate of memories. "Children of the Moon," by Martin Flavin, is, according to the New York newspapers, another profound masterpiece. For all I know, it may be, as the first act was so dull and nonsensical that I left the showhouse when it was over. I am therefore not privy to the rare delights that are alleged to have bloomed subsequently. Judging from the first act, Mr. Flavin was hell bent for election on an Ibsen epic. That he far surpassed Ibsen after I had carelessly left the theatre, that, in fact, he exhibited a genius never even remotely approached by old Henrik, is clearly evident from the eulogies heaped upon him by my learned colleagues. Not since the Bard, according to Mr. John Corbin, has such a heaven-sent *geist* appeared in the drama. I am, naturally enough, thrilled to the marrow at the good news. But I am not going back to see the rest of the play.

Holy Writ

By H. L. Mencken

I

ENOUGH good intentions are concealed in the "Riverside New Testament," a translation "from the original Greek into the English of today" by the Rev. William G. Ballantine, D.D., LL.D. (*Houghton*), to pave all the avenues and side-streets of Hell from the Jonathan Edwards monument to the Boulevard of the Popes. It is the pious and laborious work of a divine now in his seventy-fifth year, and its laudable purpose is to clear Holy Writ of its howlers and archaisms, and so bring it within the understanding of the average American reader of today. Exactly the same purpose, I hope I may say without insolence, prompted me to make my own translations of the Declaration of Independence and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address into the American vulgate; my aim was to rescue both of these great papers from the Johnsonian English in which they were couched, and thus make them comprehensible to the great masses of the plain people, who had apparently forgotten the doctrines set forth in them, and were, in fact, tarring and lynching men who presumed to preach them. But my scheme failed, and for a simple reason. The plain people, hearing the Declaration in bald American, were outraged and alarmed by the ideas in it, and proceeded only to fresh assaults upon the fanatics who voiced them. So long as the Declaration had been mainly incomprehensible to them, so long as they had apprehended it, not as a statement of concrete ideas but as a mere series of highfalutin

dithyrambs, they were able, when drunk enough, to stand it, but the moment they read it in the language of their everyday life they leaped as if stuck with pins. And not only the common people. I was also denounced by *Gelehrten* in all parts of the country, and one of them, Prof. Dr. Scott, of the University of Michigan, hastened to assure a group of visiting English professors that I was a low and contumelious fellow, and that my dissemination of notions in contempt of the Motherland was thus not to be taken gravely. It seems to me that Dr. Ballantine's new version of the New Testament will come to grief in the same manner. What he hopes to accomplish by it, as he says, is to bring what he calls "divine truth" down to the grasp of persons who get "no meaning at all or a meaning that is mistaken" out of the Authorized Version—that is, down to the generality of Americans, lay and clerical. But I greatly fear that what he will achieve, if his translation is widely circulated, is rather the propagation of agnosticism. For when they are put into plain English some of the most venerated passages in the New Testament begin to seem banal and dubious, and others begin to seem silly, and yet others begin to seem downright idiotic. In the Authorized Version their imbecility is concealed by the extremely elevated and beautiful dialect in which they are set forth, but in the speech of everyday it is only too plain.

Worse, it appears to me that Dr. Ballantine often makes a mess of his work, even when he is most faithful to his purpose—that he often fails at

his primary business of converting the archaisms of the Authorized Version into phrases that even a Methodist clergyman should understand. I turn at random, for example, to Mark VIII, and encounter one of the most familiar and moving speeches of Jesus: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Dr. Ballantine seeks to improve this by changing *nests* into *coverts* and *hath* into *has*. What a botch, indeed! *Nests* is the natural, the inevitable word; it instantly conjures up a living image; it is absolutely simple and clear. But how many Christians in America, without resort to the dictionary, could give a sound definition of *coverts*? Certainly not five per cent. I doubt, in fact, that Dr. Ballantine himself could do it, for he uses the word in a very far-fetched sense. *Covert* means, primarily, cover for ground game—a shelter in a thicket or copse. The birds of the air do not resort to *coverts*; they resort to *nests*, as the estimable Matthew plainly says. I find many other such inept renderings without leaving the First Gospel. In Matthew V, 17, for example, there is the historic pronouncement: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Dr. Ballantine converts the last clause into the incredibly clumsy and confusing: "I have not come to do away with them, but to fill them full." To *fill them full*? What on earth does that mean? With what is he going to fill them? It would be hard to imagine any worse nonsense than that. But there is actually worse. In the fortieth verse of the same chapter—"And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat . . ."—the venerable translator changes *coat* into *tunic*! Will this help the morons—or simply stump them? In the next verse—"And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile . . ."—*shall compel* is changed to *commandeer*, which has been current English only since the Boer War and is still quite incomprehensible to millions. Finally, still re-

maining in Matthew, I come to the Lord's Prayer in Chapter VI, the version read daily in the public schools of all the American states that are Christian, and familiar even to Congressmen, bishops and the inmates of houses of correction. Here, if you don't know it, is the Authorized Version:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

And here (omitting the doxology, which is not found in the oldest Greek MSS) is Dr. Ballantine's horror:

Our Father in heaven,
Thy name be kept holy;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will prevail;
As in heaven, so on earth.

Our bread for the coming day
Give us today;
And forgive us our failures
As we forgive those who fail toward us;
And bring us not into trial,
And save us from evil.

II

But this almost inconceivably fatuous effort to gild the lily is not the worst of Dr. Ballantine's offendings; he is far more dangerous to the faith, I believe, when he achieves his avowed purpose—that is, when his version of the Greek original is actually clearer and better than the rendering of the King James Version. What misleads him here is a misapprehension of the nature of religious feeling. He seems to think that it is the product of an intellectual process, that it arises out of ideas; it really has its origin in a sense of mystery, a complete escape from ideas. It seizes upon the mind most powerfully, indeed, when the evidences of its objective truth are most vague and unconvincing—in brief, when it is apprehended, not as fact, but as poetry—the negation, or, at all events, the antithesis of fact. The

success of Christianity in the world, as I have often argued, is due chiefly, if not wholly, to the incomparable beauty, as poetry, of its sacred books. It is hard to think of any other oriental religion that is not logically more plausible and persuasive, but not one of them has a sacred literature that is even remotely to be compared, for sheer gaudy loveliness, to that of the decadent Judaism which, alone among them, has enchanted the West. There are single Psalms that have ten times more beauty in them than the whole literature of Brahminism, ancient and modern; in the story of the Christ Child there is greater poetry than ever was heard of in Greece or Rome. It is this profound and disarming poetry, this irresistible evocation of the unattainable and ever to be desired, that gives Christianity its undiminished strength, despite the gradual destruction of all its so-called evidences. Poetry, I repeat, does not fetch a sentient man by convincing him; it fetches him by robbing him of the wish to be convinced—by lulling his critical faculties and setting him off upon an emotional debauch. Certainly there are few educated men left in the world who believe literally that Mary was got with child by God, or that the shepherds on the hills were guided to the manger by a dancing star, or that wise men came from the East to hail the new-born King in the manger at Bethlehem; nevertheless, that man must be a dull clod, indeed, who is not moved by the simple and charming story, and made to wish a bit wistfully that such things could really be. It is, of all stories ever devised by man, enormously the most beautiful. The Jews, when they invented it, conquered the whole Western world.

Now, poetry, as everyone knows, is a fragile flower, and will not bear transplanting—certainly not anatomizing. It cannot be reduced to plain propositions without losing everything that makes it what it is—without becoming, in fact, the very reverse of itself. Try the experiment with any poem you admire, even with "Mary Had a Little

Lamb." In prose all its bloom is gone; it becomes simply nonsense. This is true, of course, of great poetry as well as of poetry that is not great, as every attempt at a prose translation of the *Odyssey* bears witness. It is pre-eminently true of the vast body of poetry which makes up the sacred books of Christianity. Try it with any of the Psalms, with the Sermon on the Mount, with the story of the Nativity, with the roaring strophes of Revelation. The thing becomes, in the speech of everyday, a mere absurdity. It is not only not moving; it is even somewhat laughable. To get the savor of it one must have the archaic language that it stands in, with its curiously inverted syntax, its strange and often barbaric phrases, its mysterious and scarcely comprehended terms. In other words, to get the savor one must have the savor. Dr. Ballantine, in his translation, has squeezed it all out. His New Testament, ceasing to be a great poem, becomes nothing more than a series of improbable anecdotes. I cannot imagine it making any new believers, save perhaps among idiots; on the contrary, it will very likely unmake not a few old believers. This is saying that it fails of its central aim, certainly and disastrously—that all the piety of the learned and reverend translator has gone into an enterprise that will delight and prosper the devil. Seeking to make customers for theology, he has only succeeded in scaring off customers for poetry. I am convinced, indeed, that even a congregation of Presbyterians, if his banal prose were read to them aloud, would begin to cough, shuffle their feet and look at their watches.

Well, let us not heap opprobrium upon him. When he stands up to answer for his crime on the Judgment Morn, he will at least be able to say that he followed lofty precedent and thought himself in good company. The dock, indeed, will be full of holy men who sought to promote the faith by bringing the Bible to the multitude. A great folly. Poetry is always better heard than read—and it is best heard where

the lights are dim and a certain spookiness prevails. Let the priests read it, with vows to protect them, and then tell simple folk what is suitable for simple folk to hear—above all, what is within the limits of their imagination, their sense of beauty. Whoever it was that translated the Bible into excellent French prose is chiefly responsible for the collapse of Christianity in France. Contrariwise, the men who put the Bible into archaic, sonorous and often unintelligible English gave Christianity a new lease of life wherever English is spoken. They did their work at a time of great theological blather and turmoil, when men of all sorts, even the least intelligent, were beginning to take a vast and unhealthy interest in exegetics and apologetics. They were far too shrewd to feed this disconcerting thirst for ideas with a Bible in plain English; it was deliberately artificial even when it was new. They thus dispersed the mob by appealing to its emotions, as a mother quiets a baby by crooning to it. The Bible that they produced was so unutterably beautiful that the great majority of men, in the face of it, could not fix their minds upon ideas. To this day it has enchanted the English-speaking peoples so effectively that, in the main, they remain Christians, at least sentimentally. Paine has assaulted them, Darwin and Huxley have assaulted them and a multitude of other merchants of facts have assaulted them, but they still remember the twenty-third Psalm when the doctor begins to shake his head, and they are still moved beyond compare (though not, alas, to acts!) by the Sermon on the Mount, and they still turn once a year from their sordid and degrading labors to immerse themselves unashamed in the story of the manger. It is not much, but it is something. I do not admire the general run of American Christians—Methodists, United Brethren, Baptists, and such vermin. But try to imagine what the average low-browed Methodist would be if he were not a Methodist but an atheist!

The Latin Church, which I constantly find myself admiring, despite its occasional astounding imbecilities, has always kept clearly before it the fact that religion is not a syllogism, but a poem. It is accused by Protestant dervishes of withholding the Bible from the people. To some extent this is true; to the same extent the church is wise; again to the same extent it is prosperous. Its toyings with ideas, in the main, have been confined to its clergy, and they have commonly reduced the business to a harmless play of technicalities—the awful concepts of heaven and hell brought down to the level of a dispute of doctors in long gowns, eager only to dazzle other doctors. Its greatest theologians remain unknown to 99 per cent of its adherents; the great theologians of Protestantdom—Wesley, Billy Sunday and the like—are as vulgarly familiar as Babe Ruth. Rome, indeed, has not only preserved the original poetry in Christianity; it has also made capital additions to that poetry—for example, the poetry of the saints, of Mary, and of the liturgy itself. A solemn high mass is a thousand times as impressive, to a man with any genuine religious sense in him, as the most powerful sermon ever roared under the big-top by a Presbyterian auctioneer of God. In the face of such overwhelming beauty it is not necessary to belabor the faithful with logic; they are better convinced by letting them alone. Preaching is not an essential part of the Latin ceremonial. It was very little employed in the early church, and I am convinced that good effects would flow from abandoning it today, or, at all events, reducing it to a few sentences, more or less formal. In the United States the Latin brethren have been seduced by the example of the Protestants, who commonly transform an act of worship into a puerile intellectual exercise; instead of approaching God in fear and wonder these Protestants settle back in their pews, cross their legs, and listen to an ignoramus try to prove that he is a better theologian than the Pope. This

folly the Romans now slide into. Their clergy begin to grow argumentative, doctrinaire, ridiculous. It is a pity. A bishop in his robes, playing his part in the solemn ceremonial of the mass, is a dignified spectacle; the same bishop, bawling against Darwin half an hour later, is seen to be simply an elderly Irishman with a bald head, the son of a respectable police sergeant in South Bend, Ind. Let the reverend fathers go back to Bach. If they keep on spoiling poetry and spouting ideas, the day will come when some extra-bombastic deacon will astound humanity and insult God by proposing to translate the liturgy into American, that all the faithful may be convinced by it.

III

THE autobiographies of Harry Kemp, Maxwell Bodenheim and other such daredevils of Greenwich Village take on a great obviousness and decorum when put beside the "Escapade" of Evelyn Scott (*Seltzer*), and even Frank Harris' "My Life and Loves" loses something of its daring. For all these babbling males, in the end, fail to do what Mrs. Scott does: they never exhibit themselves in humiliating and degrading situations. In extremely naughty and even discreditable situations, yes—but never in the actual dust. Mrs. Scott is far more candid and courageous. The tale of her life in the backwoods of Brazil, a fugitive in company with another woman's husband, is a tale of almost inconceivable privations and hardships—a tale with little more romance in it than an attack of cholera morbus or the morning visit of the garbage-man. Do not mistake me: it is not "lewd and lascivious" in the Comstockian sense. I can find little in it to bring a blush to the maiden cheek of a Tammany judge's 30-year-old daughter. The escapade dealt with, of course, is primarily sexual, and the events include an obsterical episode that is certainly not smothered in euphemism, but there is nowhere the slightest sign of a desire to shock prudes. All

this should be said in fairness to the author, and in fairness no less to connoisseurs of pornography, who may be misled otherwise into buying the book with the loftiest expectations. Mrs. Scott aims, in fact, at higher game. She is trying to tell her story with a degree of frankness that even Frank Harris would probably balk at; she is trying to remember the days, not only when she sinned the sins that are in all autobiographies (particularly those by poets), but also the days when she was dirty and had no clean clothes, and the days when a cockroach in the stew was as familiar to her as a star in the heavens, and the days when—

But perhaps I had better halt here, for the line must be drawn somewhere. The important question is, what is the net effect of the book? Is it dignified despite its matter, or is it merely disgusting? Does it show any merit as a piece of writing, or is it only a mass of sordid scandal? It seems to me that the yes belongs in the first place both times. There is a lingering immaturity in parts of it, especially toward the end, and there are plenty of ambitious effects that fail to come off, but taking it as a whole it is a genuinely remarkable work, both as document and as literature. The reality of the thing is never in doubt for an instant. When the author postures, her posturing is naïve and unashamed, and one takes it for exactly what it is. When her syllogisms—and she is often argumentative—are feeble and unsound, it is nevertheless obvious that they are honestly her own. When she admires herself, which is not infrequently, there is always some ground for suspecting that, after all, she may have been admirable. It is a picture of a bold and foolish soul in the altogether, and there are skill and daring in almost every stroke. What brilliant and revolting sketches of that unknown and god-forsaken wilderness! What savage character portraits of the people that come in and go out of the scene! The exotic fascination of the background, of course, has its part here; the story would be a great deal

less terrible, one fancies, if it had been played out in sight of Sheridan square. But that background, remember, is not lugged in; it is as significant and inescapable as the dark forest in "Heart of Darkness"; without it, there might have been no story to tell. Mrs. Scott paints it with the utmost adeptness. It casts its sinister shadows over everything, even the inner life of the author herself. The book is something quite new. There is a quality not unlike glamor in it. It peters out in puerility, but there are moments when it is unmistakably distinguished.

The author, I confess, somewhat puzzles me. Her early book of poems I have not read, but two or three years ago she printed a very unusual novel, "The Narrow House," and gave promise of becoming a novelist of importance. This "Narrow House" was full of the thing that is vaguely called atmosphere. Out of a lumbering and sordid story there gradually emerged an extraordinarily vivid impression of an indescribable thing: the influence of human beings upon one another—their capacity for radiating a desperate and unintelligible unhappiness. It was a very creditable first novel, and I waited for its successor with the utmost interest. But that successor, "Narcissus," turned out to be flat and preposterous—a novel full of people who talked like characters in a bad Pinero play and inhabited what seemed to be separate vacuums. It was an irritating disappointment; Mrs. Scott appeared to be actually trying to imitate Gertrude Atherton, Edith Wharton or other such favorite novelists of the last generation. But "Escapade" certainly atones for that misstep. There is absolutely nothing imitative in it save the printing and binding. It is a book which, however it looks two or three years hence, will surely never get itself forgotten as an imitation. It is original in both conception and treatment, and it is original in a way that is extremely interesting. To do something that no one has ever done before is, after all, not hard, but to do something that has solid

merit is a quite different story. It seems to me that the merit of "Escapade" is of that quality. It is a bomb thrown into a quiet street. It will give the professors of Nordic blond life and letters something to screech over.

Waldo Frank's "Holiday" (*Liveright*) is another assault upon the High Church tradition in the national literature, but I find it, in the main, ineffective and unconvincing. Frank's aim, obviously, is to rescue the novel from the formalism that has long cursed it—to rid it of its conventional garrulity and sobriety of manner, and get a touch of lyrical passion into it. That aim is one that is pursued with varying success by various other writers, among them, Dorothy Richardson, Sherwood Anderson, James Joyce, and Mrs. Scott herself. But Frank, though he is bolder than any of them save Joyce, fails of his goal because his practical skill is not sufficient; he has made himself a formidable and fascinating ophicleide but he lacks the wind to blow it. Consider, for example, his first chapter. One of his main purposes here is to wash in a quick and vivid picture of a small Southern town—a dull, squalid, half-idiotic place, baking in the hot glare between the pines and the sea. He essays the business by piling up short and disconnected sentences—in brief, by trying to do it in flashes. But the effect intended is never actually achieved. The thing is jerky, stenographic, staccato, but it is not vivid at all. A Joseph Conrad, writing in the manner of a conveyancer's clerk, would get an effect a thousand times as brilliant; even an O. Henry or a Richard Harding Davis would do quite as well. Later on, when Mr. Frank yields to his lyrical impulses more ecstatically, he is far more successful. The device of putting the reveries of his characters into a sort of barbaric free verse is not at all bad; what is more, it is new, for though Joyce came close to it, he never actually did it. But that one device is not enough to save the story.

What ails the thing, at bottom, turn-

folly the Romans now slide into. Their clergy begin to grow argumentative, doctrinaire, ridiculous. It is a pity. A bishop in his robes, playing his part in the solemn ceremonial of the mass, is a dignified spectacle; the same bishop, bawling against Darwin half an hour later, is seen to be simply an elderly Irishman with a bald head, the son of a respectable police sergeant in South Bend, Ind. Let the reverend fathers go back to Bach. If they keep on spoiling poetry and spouting ideas, the day will come when some extra-bombastic deacon will astound humanity and insult God by proposing to translate the liturgy into American, that all the faithful may be convinced by it.

III

THE autobiographies of Harry Kemp, Maxwell Bodenheim and other such daredevils of Greenwich Village take on a great obviousness and decorum when put beside the "Escapade" of Evelyn Scott (*Seltzer*), and even Frank Harris' "My Life and Loves" loses something of its daring. For all these babbling males, in the end, fail to do what Mrs. Scott does: they never exhibit themselves in humiliating and degrading situations. In extremely naughty and even discreditable situations, yes—but never in the actual dust. Mrs. Scott is far more candid and courageous. The tale of her life in the backwoods of Brazil, a fugitive in company with another woman's husband, is a tale of almost inconceivable privations and hardships—a tale with little more romance in it than an attack of cholera morbus or the morning visit of the garbage-man. Do not mistake me: it is not "lewd and lascivious" in the Comstockian sense. I can find little in it to bring a blush to the maiden cheek of a Tammany judge's 30-year-old daughter. The escapade dealt with, of course, is primarily sexual, and the events include an obsterical episode that is certainly not smothered in euphemism, but there is nowhere the slightest sign of a desire to shock prudes. All

this should be said in fairness to the author, and in fairness no less to connoisseurs of pornography, who may be misled otherwise into buying the book with the loftiest expectations. Mrs. Scott aims, in fact, at higher game. She is trying to tell her story with a degree of frankness that even Frank Harris would probably balk at; she is trying to remember the days, not only when she sinned the sins that are in all autobiographies (particularly those by poets), but also the days when she was dirty and had no clean clothes, and the days when a cockroach in the stew was as familiar to her as a star in the heavens, and the days when—

But perhaps I had better halt here, for the line must be drawn somewhere. The important question is, what is the net effect of the book? Is it dignified despite its matter, or is it merely disgusting? Does it show any merit as a piece of writing, or is it only a mass of sordid scandal? It seems to me that the yes belongs in the first place both times. There is a lingering immaturity in parts of it, especially toward the end, and there are plenty of ambitious effects that fail to come off, but taking it as a whole it is a genuinely remarkable work, both as document and as literature. The reality of the thing is never in doubt for an instant. When the author postures, her posturing is naïve and unashamed, and one takes it for exactly what it is. When her syllogisms—and she is often argumentative—are feeble and unsound, it is nevertheless obvious that they are honestly her own. When she admires herself, which is not infrequently, there is always some ground for suspecting that, after all, she may have been admirable. It is a picture of a bold and foolish soul in the altogether, and there are skill and daring in almost every stroke. What brilliant and revolting sketches of that unknown and god-forsaken wilderness! What savage character portraits of the people that come in and go out of the scene! The exotic fascination of the background, of course, has its part here; the story would be a great deal

less terrible, one fancies, if it had been played out in sight of Sheridan square. But that background, remember, is not lugged in; it is as significant and inescapable as the dark forest in "Heart of Darkness"; without it, there might have been no story to tell. Mrs. Scott paints it with the utmost adeptness. It casts its sinister shadows over everything, even the inner life of the author herself. The book is something quite new. There is a quality not unlike glamor in it. It peters out in puerility, but there are moments when it is unmistakably distinguished.

The author, I confess, somewhat puzzles me. Her early book of poems I have not read, but two or three years ago she printed a very unusual novel, "The Narrow House," and gave promise of becoming a novelist of importance. This "Narrow House" was full of the thing that is vaguely called atmosphere. Out of a lumbering and sordid story there gradually emerged an extraordinarily vivid impression of an indescribable thing: the influence of human beings upon one another—their capacity for radiating a desperate and unintelligible unhappiness. It was a very creditable first novel, and I waited for its successor with the utmost interest. But that successor, "Narcissus," turned out to be flat and preposterous—a novel full of people who talked like characters in a bad Pinero play and inhabited what seemed to be separate vacuums. It was an irritating disappointment; Mrs. Scott appeared to be actually trying to imitate Gertrude Atherton, Edith Wharton or other such favorite novelists of the last generation. But "Escapade" certainly atones for that misstep. There is absolutely nothing imitative in it save the printing and binding. It is a book which, however it looks two or three years hence, will surely never get itself forgotten as an imitation. It is original in both conception and treatment, and it is original in a way that is extremely interesting. To do something that no one has ever done before is, after all, not hard, but to do something that has solid

merit is a quite different story. It seems to me that the merit of "Escapade" is of that quality. It is a bomb thrown into a quiet street. It will give the professors of Nordic blond life and letters something to screech over.

Waldo Frank's "Holiday" (*Liveright*) is another assault upon the High Church tradition in the national literature, but I find it, in the main, ineffective and unconvincing. Frank's aim, obviously, is to rescue the novel from the formalism that has long cursed it—to rid it of its conventional garrulity and sobriety of manner, and get a touch of lyrical passion into it. That aim is one that is pursued with varying success by various other writers, among them, Dorothy Richardson, Sherwood Anderson, James Joyce, and Mrs. Scott herself. But Frank, though he is bolder than any of them save Joyce, fails of his goal because his practical skill is not sufficient; he has made himself a formidable and fascinating ophicleide but he lacks the wind to blow it. Consider, for example, his first chapter. One of his main purposes here is to wash in a quick and vivid picture of a small Southern town—a dull, squalid, half-idiotic place, baking in the hot glare between the pines and the sea. He essays the business by piling up short and disconnected sentences—in brief, by trying to do it in flashes. But the effect intended is never actually achieved. The thing is jerky, stenographic, staccato, but it is not vivid at all. A Joseph Conrad, writing in the manner of a conveyancer's clerk, would get an effect a thousand times as brilliant; even an O. Henry or a Richard Harding Davis would do quite as well. Later on, when Mr. Frank yields to his lyrical impulses more ecstatically, he is far more successful. The device of putting the reveries of his characters into a sort of barbaric free verse is not at all bad; what is more, it is new, for though Joyce came close to it, he never actually did it. But that one device is not enough to save the story.

What ails the thing, at bottom, turn-

ing from its manner to its matter, is simply a gigantic incapacity for accurate observation. Whether or not Frank has ever lived in the South I do not know, but the Southerners that he here sets before us, both white and black, are so unreal that they cease to be human beings at all, and become mere apparitions in a cloud of smoke. I am myself somewhat gifted as a professor of Confederates, white and black, for I have lived among them all my life—in fact, I went to school with them, was dosed with ipecac in my nonage by one of them, used to play catty with them, have had several sad love affairs with their fair but inconstant females, and share their cynical view of Abraham Lincoln to this day. All I can say is that I have never encountered any such Southern colored youth as the one Frank hounds to an undeserved lynching, and that I have never heard of any Southern white woman who was even remotely like the gal he depicts as succumbing to the young Ethiop's manly beauty, and even proposing to dance before him in the altogether. (Since Anderson's "Many Marriages" all the novelists of the Village seem to be pulling off their undershirts). Nor have I ever heard any Southerners, white or black, employ the phrases that Frank puts into the mouths of his characters. He actually makes them misuse the sub-Potomac pronoun, *you-all*! This is as bad as if a novelist writing of New York should manhandle the *oi* pronunciation, as in *would*. Altogether, a somewhat depressing piece of goods. A great earnestness is in it, but not much else. Frank would be improved, I suspect, if he could be set to writing editorials for the *New York Times* for thirty days and thirty nights.

"Geography and Plays," by Gertrude Stein (*Four Seas*), is 419 pages of drivel. In the days before the war, when Miss Stein printed her "Tender Buttons," there was at least some charm of novelty in her ponderous prancing. That was also the time of the first Freud uproar, and I remember

putting in an amusing evening with a distinguished American poet, examining the Stein dithyrambs in the light of the new revelation. But Freud and the device of stringing meaningless phrases together are both now stale. "Geography and Plays" is dreadful stuff, indeed. Even more dreadful is the encomiastic preface by Sherwood Anderson. As one of the earliest and most faithful admirers of Anderson I can only say that I wish heartily that he would go back to the Middle West and resume the observation and limning of its yokels, a task for which he has singular talents. If he lingers in New York any longer and ingests any more of the bilge that passes for profound thinking among the inhabitants of its literary half-world he will presently become a downright Rosicrucian.

IV

Brief Notices

MEMOIRS OF WILLIAM HICKEY, VOL. III (1782-1790), edited by Alfred Spencer (*Knopf*)—The third volume of the most amusing memoirs printed in years—a tale altogether incomparable and indescribable. The naïvete of Pepys is in it, and something of the scoundrelism of Casanova, and even something of the charm of Goldoni and Cellini.

AN OUTLAW'S DIARY, by Cécile Tormay (*McBride*)—The exhilarating and edifying story of the triumph of democracy in Hungary. I commend it to all Liberals.

IDIOMS AND IDIOMATIC PHRASES, by Frank H. Vizetelly and Leander J. de Bekker (*Funk*)—An extremely useful reference book, well planned and very competently executed.

THE EVOLUTION OF HUNGARY AND ITS PLACE IN EUROPEAN HISTORY, by Count Paul Teleki (*Macmillan*)—A clear and admirable presentation of facts of which American professors of history know nothing and American editorial writers less. A book of genuine value, with a comprehensive bibliography appended.

OF WHAT USE ARE THE COMMON PEOPLE? by Heinrich E. Buchholz (*Warwick*)—An eloquent plea for the *Homo boobus*. If God spares me, I'll probably review it at length later on.

PAUL CÉZANNE: HIS LIFE AND ART, by Ambroise Vollard (*Brown*)—An intimate and interesting account of the great French painter, devoid of all attempt at a criticism of his theories.



Men who "know it all" are not invited to read this page

THIS page is not for the wise young man who is perfectly satisfied with himself and his business equipment, who believes that the only reason he is not paid twice as much is that he has never been "given a chance."

This page is a personal message to the man who has responsibilities, who feels secretly that he ought to be earning several thousand dollars more a year, but who simply lacks the confidence necessary to lay hold on one of the bigger places in business. We would like to put into the hands of every such man a copy of a little book that contains the seeds of self-confidence. It is called "Forging Ahead in Business" and is sent without obligation.

We have in mind, for example, a certain man who is now auditor of a great corporation in the Middle West. Until he was thirty-one years of age he was a bookkeeper. His employers had made up their minds that he would always be a bookkeeper. His wife was beginning secretly to wonder. Worst of all, he himself was beginning to lose faith.

He sent for "Forging Ahead in

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that great corporation; and at 31 he was condemned to be a bookkeeper for life.

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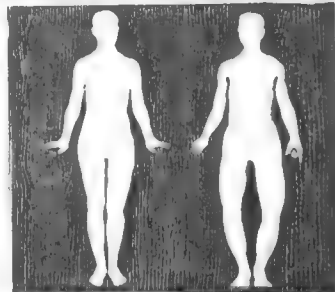
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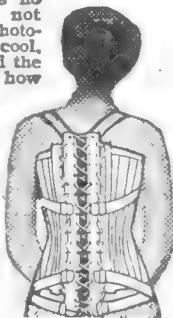
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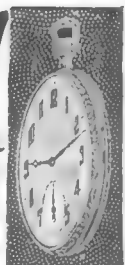
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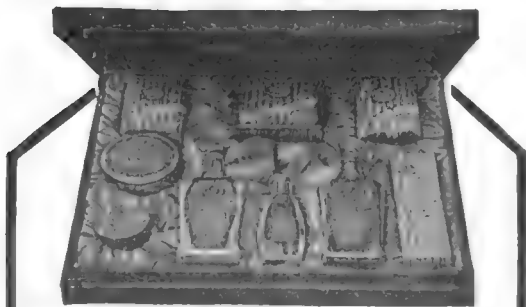
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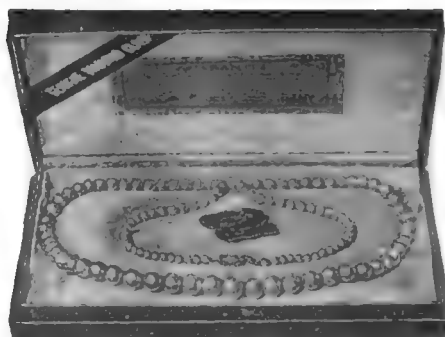


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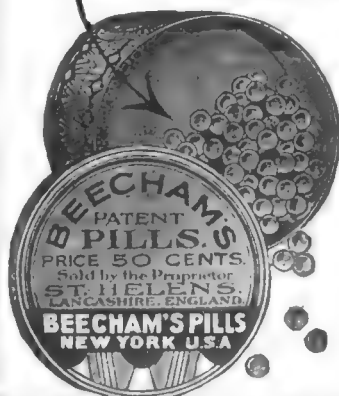
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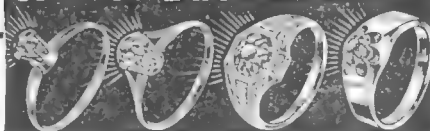
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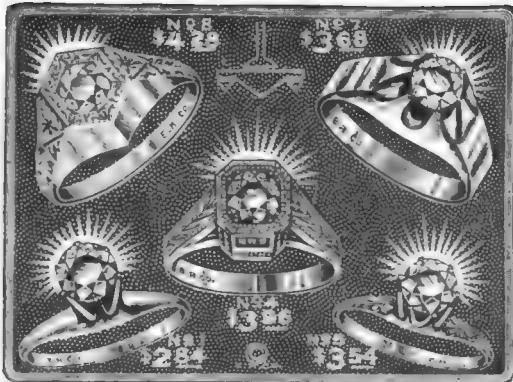
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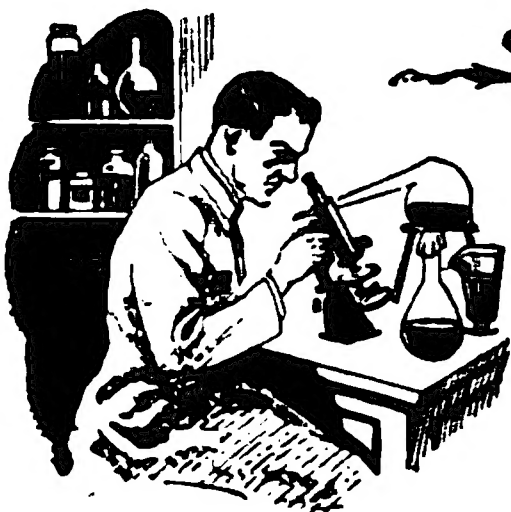
The Disclosure of a Secret of African Natives Seems a Step Towards Restoration of Vim and Vigor to Those Old Before Their Time

Since the dawn of time and the advent of man the cry has ever been, "give me enduring youth with all its pulsating joys and charms—let me live longer and more fully."

And ceaselessly the search has gone on to find the secret of the vital spark of life—the thing that makes for perpetual youth with all its animation and eagerness. Ponce de Leon, the famous Spanish explorer, gave his life in searching the American wilderness for the "Fountain of Youth." Faust, the famous character of fiction, bartered his soul for eternal youth.

The discoveries of science are already said to have lengthened the span of life and vigor by fifteen to twenty years. Scientific investigation of wild animal life in the African jungles may bring to light another link in the search for the mythical "Fountain of Youth."

It is said that scientists exploring Africa and closely observing the native customs were astonished at the endurance and vitality displayed by many of the oldest men of the tribe. Seemingly with them age was not a matter of years, but of vim, vigor and vitality. Before



ceremonials and orgie-like dances these natives were seen to eat of the bark of a certain tree. Careful experimenting seemed to prove that this practice was largely responsible for the youth-like vigor displayed, and for this reason the scientists prepared an extract which seemingly contained concentrated powers. This extract was given to hundreds of civilized men and surprising results were frequently observed in as short a time as twenty-four hours. Often symptoms of depression,



lack of force, vigor and vitality seemed to vanish almost over-night.

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Anyone who can remember a tune can easily and quickly learn to play popular jazz or American rhythm by ear at a very small cost. The New Niagara Method makes piano playing wonderfully simple.

No matter how little you know about music—even though you “have never touched a piano”—if you can just remember a tune, you can quickly learn to *play by ear*. I have perfected an entirely new and simple system. It shows you so many little tricks that it just comes natural to pick out on the piano any piece you can hum. Beginners and even those who could not learn by the old fashioned method grasp the Niagara Idea readily, and follow through the entire course of twenty lessons quickly. Self-instruction—no teacher required. You learn many new styles of bass, syncopation—blues, fill-ins, breaks and trick endings. It's all so easy—so interesting that you'll be amazed.

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One who can sit down at any time *without notes or music*, reel off the latest jazz and popular song-hits that entertain folks, is always the center of attraction, the life of the party, sought after and invited everywhere. Make yourself the center of attraction—master the piano by spending an hour a day studying the fascinating Niagara Method.

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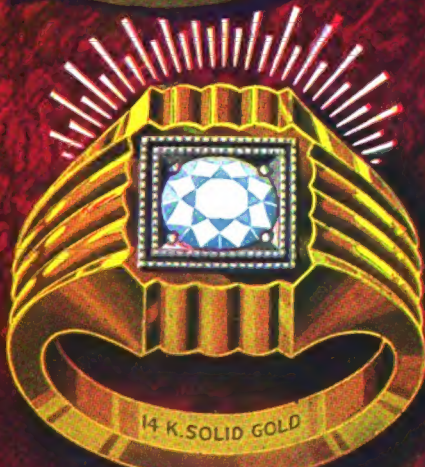
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\$50.00
Cut to
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The rings illustrated (the ladies' pictured above and the men's shown below) sell regularly for \$50.00 each. We have cut the price to only \$38.75 on this special free trial offer. Both rings are 14K solid gold with 18K white gold tops—they are set with fine large, brilliant, blue white, top-quality, perfectly cut genuine diamonds. We'll send your choice, all charges prepaid, on approval for a week. Just mail the coupon—enclose no money—pay no C. O. D.—make no deposit. After a week return the ring if you do not want it. If satisfied, keep it and pay only \$3.75 a month until \$38.75 is paid. The trial is free—no obligation to buy. Mail coupon at once

Read every word of this amazing new offer—wear this Genuine Diamond Ring for a full week at our expense—deposit nothing—absolutely no risk or expense to you.

Mail the free trial coupon below—do not enclose a penny. We will send you on approval, at our expense, all charges prepaid, your choice of these handsome genuine diamond rings. Pay nothing when the ring arrives—make no deposit of any kind. Wear the ring a week; show it to your friends; see if you can duplicate it for fifty dollars in the stores. Then, after a week, decide. If you wish to return the ring, do so at our expense and that settles everything. The trial is entirely free. You pay nothing, so you can lose nothing.

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Genuine Diamonds

The Ladies' Ring (upper illustration) is an elaborate pierced model executed in 14-K solid green gold, with an 18-K hand engraved and beaded white gold top. A striking new model. It is set with a large brilliant, blue-white, top quality, perfectly cut, genuine diamond—remarkably big value, worth at least \$50.00 anywhere. Our price is only \$38.75, with a year to pay. (\$3.75 a month.)

The Men's Ring (lower illustration) is a handsome new fluted design, extra massive 14-K solid gold with an 18-K hand engraved and beaded white gold top. Set with a large brilliant, blue-white, top quality, perfectly cut, genuine diamond. Try to duplicate this ring for less than fifty dollars. Our price is only \$38.75, payable \$3.75 a month, a year to pay.

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Enclose Ring Size
Send No Money
Pay No C.O.D.

Mail this Coupon

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Oct. 2, 1937

Send me absolutely free and prepaid, for a week's trial, the genuine diamond ring (pictured below). I am to pay nothing when it arrives. After one week I will either return the ring by registered mail and pay the cost of postage, or I will keep the ring and pay you \$3.75 each month until \$38.75 has been paid. ☐ **MY FINGER SIZE** (to be marked on the ring) remains with you until fully paid. ☐ **Ladies' Ring No. A4350** ☐ **Men's Ring No. A4600**

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Nature's Way to Beauty

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Clever men and women use Mineralava and Mineralava Face Finish to retain or regain a perfect complexion and a youthful contour. It is your safeguard against wrinkles, sagging muscles and complexion blemishes. This is the twenty-fourth year of honorable service to the men and women of the world.

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*Easily applied with
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